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Jiang to Tourist: Glad You Had Nice Stay

By Zhao Pu

President Jiang Zemin has written back to an American tourist who sent a letter to him in China after his trip to China.

Michael O'Shea, an American tourist from New York State, sent a letter to Jiang, introducing his "wonderful experiences" in China in May and making suggestions to China's tourism services.

Jiang praised the well-written letter, saying he was pleased to know O'Shea and his family had such experiences. In the letter, Jiang quoted a Chinese saying as "seeing is believing," noting that what O'Shea experienced in China proved the Chinese people, "cherish goodwill toward the American people."

He expressed the hope that American friends will visit China more often and the friendship between the two peoples will grow. Non-governmental exchanges, wrote Jiang, are the basis of good state-to-state relations and the Sino-American friendship is conducive to world peace and development.

He welcomed further suggestions from O'Shea on China's tourism services, and sent greetings to his family members.



Xinhua photo

Ancient Horses Gallop Free

By Li Zongpin / Shan Jinliang

In a bold gamble aimed at rescuing the world's rarest horses from imminent extinction, 27 were released into the Kala Maili Natural Reserve in Xinjiang on Tuesday.

The Przewalski's horses had been specifically bred, fed and nurtured to be strong enough to survive a successful reintroduction to the wild. The last wild Przewalski's horse was sighted in 1968. By Jan. 1, 1987, a total of 723 animals were left in world zoos. Less than 1,000 are believed to exist today.

The horses are doubly rare: the Przewalski's horse has existed on earth for more than 60 million years, and is now the only species of that time to survive in the world. So far.

Man-made encroachment of their wild habitat and inbreeding has weakened the animal's physique and thus its odds of survival to the brink of extinction. It's no easy task for artificially bred horses to return successfully to natural competition, said Cao Jie, director of the Xinjiang Przewalski's Horse Breeding Center. It will take at least 10 years for the domesticated horses to adjust, according to even the most optimistic estimates.

Thousands of Asiatic wild asses will compete for food and water. Experts also remain uncertain whether the horses will survive attacks from prairie wolves. But what worries wildlife experts the most are the adverse living conditions the animals must face, especially the big freeze that killed thousands of animals in the area last winter. Open-air stations will monitor the horses' progress through wireless transmitters, in addition to "one-week adjustment training". The weekly training is designed to evade catastrophic events and enhance breeding opportunities.

With upright mane and dark stripe on the back, the horse was discovered by Russian geographer Nikolay Przhevalsky (1839-1888) in northwest China near the Mongolian border in 1879.

EDITOR: LIU FENG XIA LEI DESIGNER: PANG LEI

By Zhao Pu

The newly-elected president of the International Olympic Committee pronounced himself "fully confident" the Chinese capital will deliver the "best possible" Olympics in 2008 in a two-day visit to the city.

"Of course I have not seen much of the installations," said Jacques Rogge at a press conference Monday afternoon, "but I am sure that the organizers of the 2008 Games will provide what is needed."

President Jiang Zemin met Rogge on Tuesday. He congratulated him on his election to IOC president and extended thanks for his support in Beijing's bid. Jiang also backed Rogge's determination to clamp down on corruption and doping.

Rogge met Beijing Mayor Liu Qi and Chinese Olympic Committee President Yuan Weimin. He left Beijing on Tuesday afternoon.

Rogge also toured the Athletes' Village and Universiade sports venues to study Beijing's preparations for the Olympics and to observe the ongoing 21st Universiade.

Rogge was elected the eighth IOC president on July 16 at the 112th IOC Session in Moscow, together with the Beijing's victorious 2008 Olympic bid. This is his first visit to a major international sports event since taking the helm of the Olympic ship.

(See Page 8)
(Xinhua photo)

IOC President: 'Fully Confident' in Beijing

By Tian Liping / Zhao Pu
/ Zhou Song

Like a rudderless ship cast adrift in an ocean of land, the capital city is moving east five millimeters a year.

That's the long and the tall of the plate tectonics, according to the Chinese scientists who spent six years studying the speed of

Beijing Moves East

crust movements at 81 points around the country. Southwest and northwestern China crust movements at different speeds are slowly bashing Beijing towards the sea.

Not only Beijing, but the whole Eurasia continent is moving east, said Ma Zongjin, an academician of Chinese Academy of Sciences and chief writer of a treatise published in the Chinese Science Bulletin.

This is the first time scientists have determined accurate speeds of crust movement in China, by using a global positioning observation system. Research could aid airplane navigation, earthquake predictions and topographical surveys, said Ma. And the big squeeze means the whole country is shrinking little by little "at an extremely low velocity," he said.

State Council Calls First AIDS Press Conference

Figures Expose Village, National Problem

By Shan Jinliang

The Health Ministry published figures from an AIDS stricken village in Central China in a press release of August 23. This is the first time the State Council has disclosed such information.

Wenlou, a village in Henan Province, has been devastated by AIDS. Statistics from the Ministry of Public Health reveal that out of the 3,170 inhabitants, 241 are

infected with AIDS, and 31 have died as a result of the virus since 1995. Yin Dakui, vice minister of Public Health, said the villagers are the victims of illegal and improper collecting of blood plasma.

AIDS experts and medical teams have been dispatched to the virus-infected area to treat the AIDS/HIV patients, and local medical centers have been established. Yin also said the ministry will work closely with the police to fight against under-

ground plasma collecting, purchasing and selling.

It is reported that Henan administrative bodies and local government have taken effective measures to curb the virus, including setting up a blood donation system.

Health authorities estimate that the number of AIDS cases in China had surpassed 600,000 by the end of 2000, after the first AIDS patient was diagnosed in 1985. But some fear the number may be

as high as 800,000 to 1,000,000. It is said that intravenous drug use is the leading cause of the spread of AIDS in the country. Sexual contact and mother-infant transmission follow just behind.

The state will spend 100 million yuan on the prevention and control of venereal disease and AIDS. A further 95 million yuan will be used to construct 250 blood banks in 20 central and western provinces and autonomous regions.

Students Given More Choices for Textbooks

By Shan Jinliang

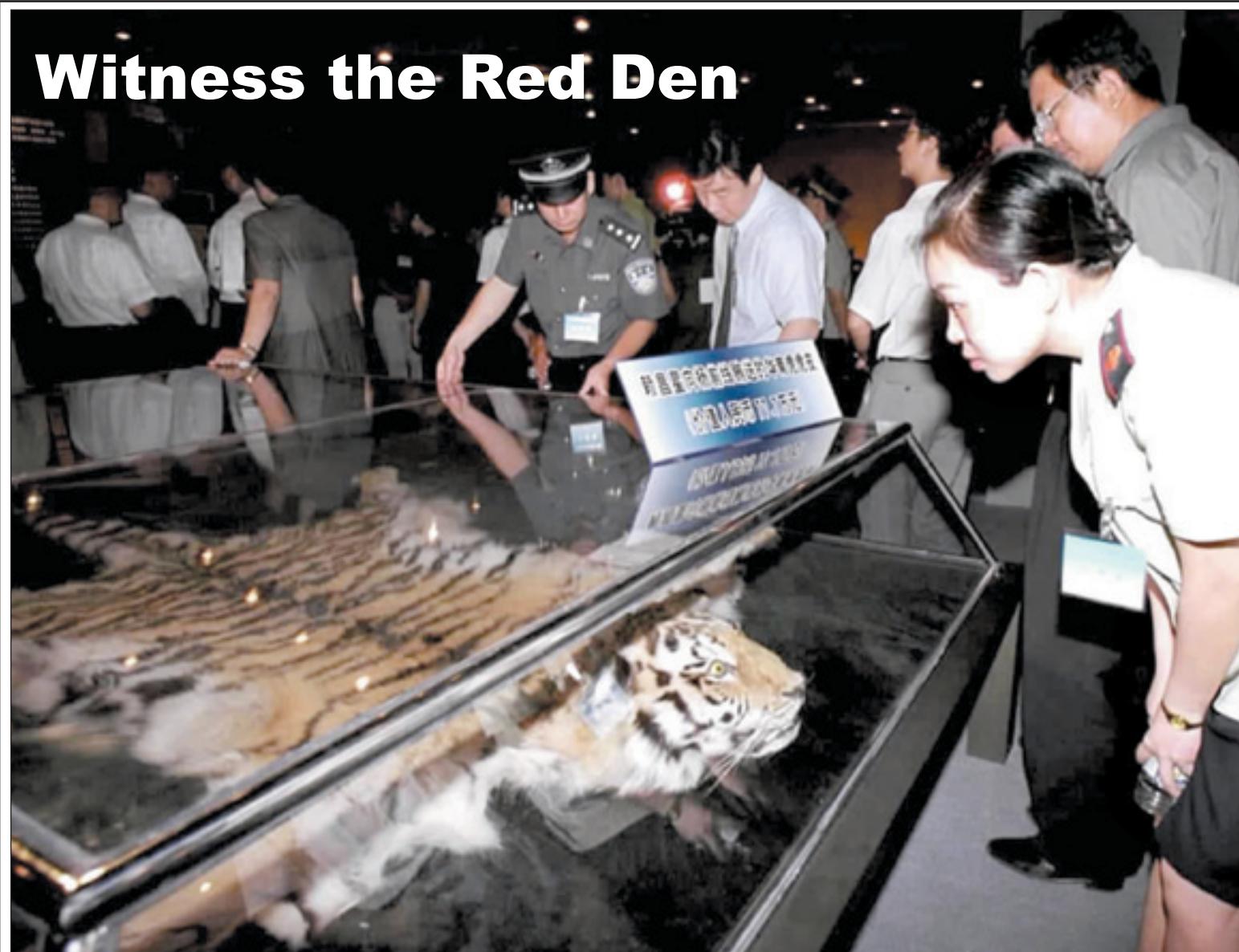
In the new semester, millions of primary and secondary school students will be free to choose the textbooks they prefer. This move is an attempt to break the national monopoly of primary and second school textbooks.

For more than 50 years the country's primary and secondary school students have only had access to state textbooks approved by the People's Education Press. Now they can have 3 versions of trial textbooks. The books are compiled and published by 14 different local publishing houses. Experts say all qualified institutions can join in the textbook compiling and publishing after approval from the state education authorities.

At the same time, Xinhua Book Stores will cease to be the only distribution channel. Different organizations and individuals will be allowed to distribute as long as the textbooks' quality and delivery time can be guaranteed.

Although the guiding principles remain unchanged, this trend toward diversified versions and distribution will serve as a positive step for students, says Mr. Liu, a principal of a famous secondary school.

Witness the Red Den



This Huinan tiger rug was given as a bribe to a former government official.

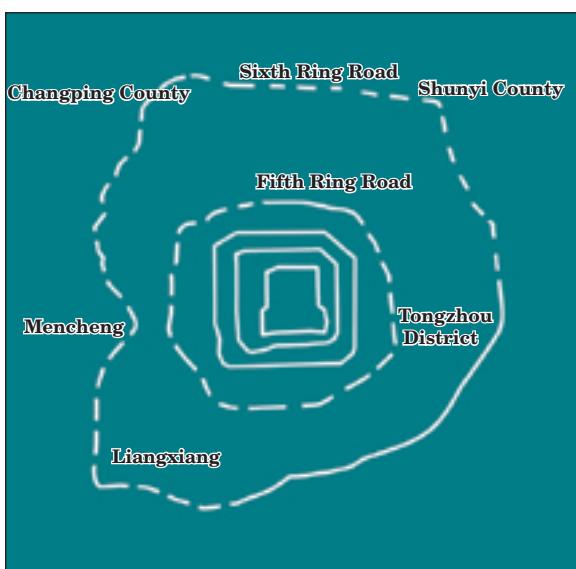
Xinhua photo

The infamous red building, together with an exhibition documenting the investigation into the Xiamen Yuanhua smuggling case, opened Monday in this port city in east China's Fujian Province.

The exhibition, covering an area of 5,300m², discloses in detail the

investigation into the biggest smuggling case in China. It is a warning to Party members and government officials in the promotion of a clean party and government. The exhibition will be on show for half a year.

(Zhao Pu)



Sketch map of the Sixth Ring Road

Sixth Ring Road Section Opens

By Liang Qi / Zhao Pu

The southeast section of the Sixth Ring Road opened on August 25. Jia Qinglin and Liu Qi, leaders of the Beijing municipal government, attended the opening ceremony.

Up to now, 200 kilometers of expressway have been opened this year in Beijing, equaling the total length of expressway built in the past 14 years. The 600-kilometer network is due to be completed by the year 2005.

With a width of 26m, 6 lanes and a speed limit of 100kmph, the Tongma and Tonghuang Sections of the expressway run over 48 kilometers, making up the southeastern part of the Sixth Ring Road. The 26-kilometer Tongma Section was completed last year; and the construction of the newly completed Tonghuang section began last May with a total investment of 1.1 billion yuan.

The biggest role of the Sixth Ring Road is relieving traffic pressure by allowing vehicles to bypass the urban area. Final toll fees are still to be fixed according to regulations issued by the State Development Planning Commission. No fees are being charged at present.

Beijing to Build China's Biggest Exhibition Hall

By Zheng Yuan / Zhao Pu

The biggest exhibition center in China will be built in Beijing as part of a major construction project in the Tenth Five-year Plan. The project has already been submitted to the State Development Planning Commission for approval.

According to the Beijing Tourism Administration, the new exhibition center will cover an area of over 200,000m² in the future Olympic Park. It will also become a functioning gymnasium for the 2008 Olympics. At present, a specific con-

struction timetable and investment plan are still being discussed. Nevertheless, it is clear that China's biggest exhibition center will be designed to meet high international standards.

Every year, Beijing hosts 80 to 85 percent of China's international conferences, seminars and forums.

Though still in its infancy, the project has already provoked much discussion in the exhibition industry.

According to Liang Wen, general manager of China International Exhibition Corporation, there are less than 10 exhibition halls that

have an area bigger than 50,000m² around the country.

Although there are many exhibition halls in China, they are mostly small in size and incomplete in facilities. Beijing International Exhibition Center, currently the biggest exhibition hall in Beijing covering an area of 60,000m², also fails to come up to the capital's status and needs.

Moreover, in the past, Beijing missed many opportunities due to a lack of exhibition halls capable of holding more than 10,000 people.



Xinhua photo

Gansu Grotto City Begins Festival

The first China Dunhuang International Cultural Tourism Festival was held in Dunhuang, Gansu Province, in Northwest China on August 28. Dunhuang, a historical and cultural city, is famed for its stone grotto arts of Mogao Grottoes, the stunning landscapes of the Northwestern frontier. Above is the spectacular view of Early Moon Spring on Dunguang's Sand Calling Hill.

(Shan Jinliang)

PBOC Lowers Savings Rates for Foreign Currency

Approved by the State Council, the People's Bank of China (PBOC) decided to lower the domestic savings rates for small sums of foreign currency from Thursday.

The rate for the U.S. dollar for one year term will be lowered by 0.1875 to 2.3125 percent.

Railcom Woos Consumers with Low Price

By Zhao Pu

The Ministry of Information Industry (MII) approved China National Railway Signal & Communications Corp.'s new pricing standard in August.

Railcom's newly adopted pricing categories covering the areas of local calls, domestic long-distance calls, public telephones, data business and rental circuits are on average 10 to 20 percent lower than China Telecom.

In detail, the local calls and basic monthly rental fees are lower by 10 percent than China Telecom; domestic long-distance calls are priced at 6 cents per minute, with a 10 to 50 percent discount from 21:00pm to 7:00am.

The MII has granted Railcom the usage right of the first-category code resource. In the area of long-distance access codes, Railcom is now applying for the "06X" access code. And besides the service licenses it owns now, Railcom is still actively applying for the IP and international long-distance services.

Meanwhile, Railcom's branches around the country are quickly drafting contracts with local branches of other telecommunication operators in China. Up to now, Railcom's 27 provincial branches have signed the contract, leaving only the Beijing and Inner Mongolia branches.

Newly emerging on the stage of China's telecommunication, Railcom offers consumers a second choice at a lower price.

Chinese Consumers to Accept Credit

The fourth and latest China Consumer Credit Consumption Index Survey, sponsored by MasterCard International China and published by China Economic Monitoring & Analysis Center (CEMAC), shows further improvement in consumers' perception and acceptance of credit consumption.

The latest survey was conducted in late June 2001. Survey respondents were permanent residents over 18 years of age and employed in financial enterprises with an annual turnover of RMB10 million (US\$1 million). A total of 2,100 consumers were surveyed in seven of China's largest cities. The survey analyzed six types of credit consumption, namely: financial institution loans, credit cards, installment payment plans provided by merchants, non-mortgage installment from financial institutions, non-mortgage installments and loans (in the form of cash) from friends and relatives.

Of the six forms of credit consumption, the first three forms are still the most widely recognized and accepted by consumers, as reflected in previous surveys.

Sinopec Breaches IPO Price

By Su Peng

Sinopec, the second largest oil company in China down-broke its IPO price (4.22 yuan) on August 23 arriving at a share value of 4.14 yuan after a period of long-stretching gloom from its IPO date, August 8.

The Shenzhen and Shanghai index also dropped to the lowest point of the year, with Sinopec's diving as a principle factor.

With a total value 4.54 billion shares on the Shanghai stock market, Sinopec used to be looked on as a new star of hope before its IPO.

However, to the disappointment of all the prospects look bleak as Sinopec has also depressed the trend of the whole Shanghai and Shenzhen market with the great influence of its enormous share amount.

On August 27, Sinopec posted its interim report which gave the good news that the firm's interim net profit is 8.107 billion yuan, 34% rise compared to the same period of the last year. Nevertheless, Sinopec share price was at 4.00 yuan on August 28.

Head of York-point Escapes

By Zhao Yijiang

Luo Cheng, board chairman of Yorkpoint S&T (0008.sz), disappeared recently, according to *Caijing Magazine*. After the China Securities Regulatory Commission (CSRC) punished four companies, for manipulating the trading prices of Yorkpoint in April, it was found out later that three of the four companies' two representatives have a strong relationship with Luo Cheng himself. One is Luo's niece, the other is Luo's driver. They are both former employees of Yorkpoint, and their offices are located in Yorkpoint related buildings.

As the first ever stock which attained a value of more than 100 yuan per share, Yorkpoint was described as the fairy tale of China's stock market. Its price rose from 5.6 yuan in August 1998 to 126.31 yuan in February 2000.

The four investment consulting companies purchased Yorkpoint's stock from 0.53 million shares to 30.01 million shares by using 627 personal stock accounts and 3 legal person stock accounts. Their behavior violated article 71 and article 74 of the Securities Law of China. The four companies' illegal gains of 449 million yuan were confiscated and a fine of 449 million yuan was imposed, according to a circular from the CSRC.

The brokers directly in charge were arrested, and the majority of Yorkpoint's managers were put under scrutiny. So it is hardly surprising that the market paid attention to Luo's escape.

Ramos Beijing Bound

By Jiang Zhong

Former Philippines President Fidel V. Ramos arrived in Beijing last Sunday to join Vice Premier Qian Qichen and the CPPCC's Vice Chairman Chen Jinhua and other Chinese and foreign dignitaries in the launching of the Bo'ao Forum for Asia (BFA) membership drive and opening of the Beijing BFA office.

In addition, Ramos will lecture at the Beijing University Symposium on Asia-Pacific Security and related issues. Ramos will also visit industrial estates, manufacturing plants and agricultural farms that showcase Chinese technology that the Philippines may be able to use.

It's the Euro's Turn

Expert estimates: euro will rise to 1:1 against dollar sometime next year

By Jason Young/Zhou Song

"When the euro was born at the beginning of the year 2000, a lot of bankers in Wall Street laughed and criticized the new comers. At that time the US economy was running well. But now it's our turn. We sat here to observe the devaluation of the US dollar," said Morbert Walter, Chief Economist of Deutsche Bank Group, at a seminar held by the Embassy of Germany to China on August 22nd.

Morbert Walter estimated that euro will climb as high as dollar in the first quarter of next year. The attention of dealers is now turning to euro zone current figures: the euro held \$0.92 on 22nd August.

The US senior official insisted on the dollar's strength; now there is only silence

There are more factors responsible for the change. The main reason comes down to the dollar getting tired. The truth is that the Treasury secretary of the U.S.A. is responsible for keeping the dollar strong. The manufacturing sector has been in recession for the past year and



Graphic by Ji Donghui

lately, the nation's biggest names have been complaining that the dollar is hammering their earnings, making it tough for them to sell their goods overseas just as the global economy slows. Especially, they have warned that earnings from their overseas subsidiaries are getting clobbered when they repatriate weak for-

eign currencies into the higher-priced dollars. The strong dollar's impact on the economy has been "staggering". It's clear that the US was abandoned or changed its dollar's strength policy.

Walter bets the euro will hold 1.1:1 against the dollar

These comments could be significant for the euro, particularly

may have reservations about the strength of the European economy, though; it's a challenge for the highly competitive and unitary currency to support such a rate. Moreover, the Central Bank of Europe will slash interest rates by 1 percentage point from 4.5 to 3.5. Indeed, if the dollar is stable and healthy, it will trigger the economic recovery of the US, also boosting the European economy, which spells a bright future for the euro. Although the euro has come a long way in a short space of time, it is not surprising that it isn't growing fast.

A Conflicting View

Although Walter has an optimistic view on the euro, an analyst in Beijing sticks to his own opinion. "Germany just released a report of its economy, in the second quarter Germany only has a GDP growth rate of 0.26%. It shows that the economy of Europe is as sick as the US," said Ji Donghui, a Beijing well-known foreign currency analyst, at interview. "According to the trend, from 1992, the German Mark has constantly fallen against the dollar. So there is little hope for the Euro to climb to the same value as the dollar in a short time."

Local Toy Makers to Make Their Own Mickey Mouse

More than just 'Made in China'

By Shan Jinliang

Qiaoxiong, sponsor of the Universiade mascot "Lala", and China's largest toy maker, will open 5 to 10 toy stores in Beijing, Shanghai and other major cities in the next 5 years, says Xu Qifeng, CEO of the company.

The company is said to open 100 to 200 chain stores to build up China's "Disney" in the long run.

Faced with the challenges of pending entry into WTO, China's companies should not live by price competition, but turn to brand competition in the future as big brand stores like Disney will appear in the country's toy industry. Xu spoke frankly about his idea to develop Qiaoxiong from "Made in China" to "Made by Famous Brands".

Putian, a world famous shoe producing city in Fujian Province, produces shoes of famous sports brands, including Nike and Adidas. Local producers do not have their own brands and they can only charge the processing fee.

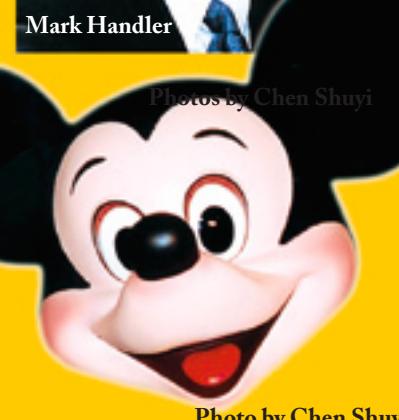
Chinese producers can earn several dollars from "Made in China" shoes, whereas they can earn dozens of dollars when the shoes are marked with famous brands from the west. It shows the difficult situation China's producers are facing in earning their profits. Qiaoxiong has exported nearly all its products before, mainly to the US and Europe, but has the same problem. Now the company is trying to find a solution.

The government will intensify its efforts to crack down on pirated products after China's entry into WTO, which will guarantee the establishment of their brands. Secondly, China will allow foreign investment on chain industries after entry. Once Qiaoxiong builds up its company image, the company will be able to develop through franchising.



Disney Launches Chinese Website

Benefit of deal lie off-line



By Yang Xiao

World entertainment giant Disney Internet Group and a local listed company Searainbow Holding Co. announced last Sunday in Beijing that they will cooperate in setting up a Chinese website.

Negotiations lasted one year in total. Disney will invest little money in the website, yet the partner Searainbow will consume 30 million yuan within 3 years.

Searainbow President Kang Jian said to *Beijing Today*, "we will pay Disney a licensing fee for using their brand name. We will hold some promotion activities for the web off-line under Disney's permission."

"Disney will seek to use the site to strengthen its brand in China, where its cartoon characters are already known to many children through television. The small but growing number of Chinese children who have access to a computer, will be able to log on to the site and play games with Disney characters," said

Mark Handler, executive vice president and managing director of the international section of Disney's Internet unit. "It is a great way for children to go online and have great fun in

a friendly and safe environment," he said at the opening ceremony. Disney revealed that it would construct a Disney World in Beijing before the 2008 Olympic Games. The website is a way of breaking the limits set by the government.

These limits include a ban on Disney to show their Cartoon Characters on Chinese TV. Searainbow has its own agenda. It has spent millions of RMB to acquire 6 to 7 major Internet companies. One of the Internet companies, named ourgame.com, is the largest on-line game website, and over 2 thirds of Chinese netizens are their customers. Last year the company made a 12 million-yuan profit. It needs Disney's well-known cartoon characters to build a digital entertainment system in 3 years.

From Peasant to Netbar Millionaire



By Yang Xiao

At the Athletes' Village of the 21st Universiade, there is a large Internet bar that attracts a lot of villagers. The 450 PCs belong to Wang Yuesheng, the owner of Feiyu Netbar Street. The street to the south of Beijing University was torn down government's order in April. At the same time Wang accepted the Universiade's invitation to open a new net bar for the games.

"I always do business under the authorities' directions. When Haidian District Government asked me to leave, I didn't hesitate and moved away within a week. To open a netbar in the village is a nonprofit program. Because the bar is just for the Universiade, I must move after that. So I took the invitation as an order," said Wang on Tuesday at an interview with *Beijing Today*.

Businessmen involved in loss incurring business are considered nuts by Westerners. But staying close to the government is Wang's basic policy. He sticks to his specific Chinese ways, from rural Shanxi province to the city of Beijing, from peasant to millionaire.

Spent 200 to borrow 800

Although Wang has owned more than 60 million-yuan assets, he started on less than 200 yuan in 1983.

As a peasant there is little opportunity to get rich. Wang had to borrow some money to start his business. So he spent all his 200 yuan on treating bank officials with dinners and cigarettes and finally got a loan of 800 yuan. He bought 1 cart and 5 spades to start his construction business. He quickly got rich and accumulated 70,000 yuan by the end of 1985. And then he set up 12 gas stations by the end of 1989. In Shanxi now he has 60 million-yuan wealth in both sectors.

Shift to high-tech biz

In 1998 he got tired of gas stations and went to Beijing Zhongguancun to find a high-tech project.

He found out that a lot of students gathered at Internet bars to surf the net and set up his first Internet bar with 800,000 yuan near China Nationalities University after the Universiade. His business will forge ahead for sure. "I love this business and will stick to it for at least 10 years," he said with great conviction.



Photo by Jia Ting

At first he charged 20 yuan per hour for the Internet. However students are poor, so he cut the price by half, and set a free charge time from 7:00am-9:00am. Therefore students who wanted to surf free had to change their bad habits of sleeping late, and so suddenly every morning there were lines of students outside the bar.

Wang's golden age

In 2000 Wang acquired more than ten adjacent shops and formed Feiyu Bar Street. This was Wang's golden age.

He had 1800 PCs, and over 20,000 users came every day. He sold breakfast and lunch and dinner there. He then started to sell advertising billboards to Internet companies. Next he made over 300 Feiyu Franchise all over the country and charged them 10,000 yuan per year and sold them as self-made PCs. There were 15,000 PCs sold last year. The original 800,000 yuan transformed itself into a staggering 30 million yuan.

But things don't always run so smoothly. Because Internet bars are a high profit business, there are a lot of government officials from different departments seeking to interfere and get benefits.

Wang suffered interventions. In 2001, his bar street was forced out. According to his plan, he will set up another netbar near China Nationalities University after the Universiade. His business will forge ahead for sure. "I love this business and will stick to it for at least 10 years," he said with great conviction.

Beijing to Develop 10 Residential Complexes

Hutchison Whampoa Properties leads with 10 billion yuan investment

By Zhao Hongyi

Beijing is to develop ten residential complexes along its fourth ring road, a move which has attracted the attention of Mr. Li Ka-shing, the real estate tycoon from Hong Kong's Hutchison Whampoa Properties.

Currently, Beijing city proper has a total area of 60 square kilometers with a permanent

resident population of over 1.7 million. The average density is 28,000 heads per square kilometer, which is too high for any further development.

In order to develop suburban areas and ease population pressure within the city, the municipal government outlined a residential development initiative several years ago, identifying 10 areas between the city's fourth and fifth ring road, forming a tight circle surrounding the downtown of Beijing.

Hutchison Whampoa Properties, the No.1 real estate developer in Hong Kong, expressed their intention to invest over 10 billion yuan for the development of the Dong'ba center, one of the ten residential complexes.

According to an official from the Construction Committee of Chaoyang District, where Dong'ba is located, the center will be a middle to high quality residential complex of low density. The total area of Dong'ba is 3626 hectares, of which 1767

hectares are available for construction. The total number of inhabitants will be around 150,000.

It is believed that Hutchison Whampoa Properties will sign the contract with the Beijing municipality at the Beijing Cha-

oyang International Business Festival, to be held this September. Mr. Li will also be present at the ceremony, even though detailed plans for the development of this center have not yet been released.

(See page 14)



Photo by Zhuang Jian



Mortgaging targets in China have to be changed from PCs, home appliances and garments in the early 90s to cars, shares, bonds, securities and residential apartments today.

Photo by Zhuang Jian

Pawn Shops Gain Ground

By Zhao Hongyi

"Dian'dang", pawn or mortgage in Chinese, was prohibited on the Chinese mainland after the founding of the People's Republic in 1949.

Since the late 1980s, "Dian'dang" has once again appeared in China as a financing method, but in a modest way. In the early 90s, pawn shops first erupted. But most of them could hardly make a profit due to the abnormal market order. The owners of the "Dian'dang-hang" (pawn shop) feel hesitant to openly advocate their business in society and their customers always feel ashamed of pawn their private property.

It is learnt by *Beijing Today* that a new set of management rules concerning this business, the Management Regulations on Mort-

gage, is believed to be published and practiced within the next few months. More and more investors are now eagerly waiting to enter this market, believed to be quite profitable.

The new Regulations to be set will lower the registration capital from the former five million yuan to three million yuan, and abolish the 25% limitation for private investment. This will definitely stimulate the development of pawn business in the country.

According to a survey conducted by the National Bureau of Statistics, 34.7% of the country's population believes the pawn business is profitable. But due to the historical negative impact, there are only 1200 plus pawn shops around the country, most of which are located in the coastal areas of the southeastern part of the country. In Beijing, only four operate, namely Jin'bao, Fu'chang, Hua'xia and Bao'rui'tong.

It was reported that the Bank of Communications' decision to draw foreign capital was made at the beginning of this year.

An official from the Bank of Communications predicted that the whole project of drawing foreign capital hoped to be completed over the next year.

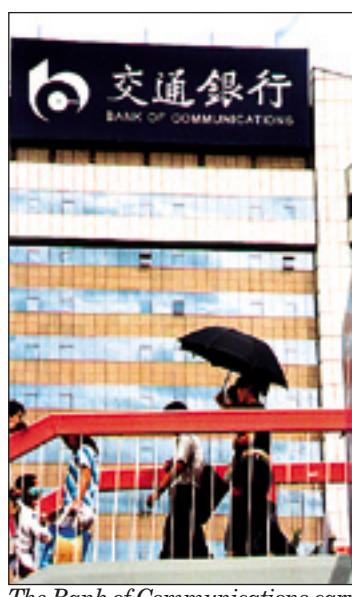
The Bank of Communications, one of the top five state-owned commercial banks in China, ranks 108th on the list of the world's 1000 banks, according to the latest issue of BANKER (July), a Britain-based financial magazine.

Professionals hold that, the admitting of foreign shareholders to the Bank of Communications implies a new trend

in capital-drawing policy of the state-owned banks. It is also believed that the Bank's move will exert positive influences on its management system and operating mechanism, as well as on its customers.

After the news was released, reports said the Bank had been in contact with some foreign financial giants including the American Citibank. The Bank emphasized yesterday in Beijing that it is still in the preliminary stages of asset evaluation, which takes several months. The spokesman for the Bank confirmed that it has no contact with the Citibank for any shares sale, except for conventional day-to-day business contacts.

"As to which foreign counterpart the Bank will cooperate with, none of us can know until next year," said the spokesman.



The Bank of Communications carried out a set of reforms on management system and operational mechanism in the first half of this year, and is continuing its successful business running.

Photo by Zhuang Jian

Domestic Heating Market Set to Expand

By Zhao Hongyi

Beijing's promise to host an environmentally friendly 2008 Olympics has attracted foreign manufacturers to take a share in the domestic heating market of the city, as well as that of the whole country.

At a recent boiler exhibition organized by the Chinese Society of Environmental Sciences, a number of foreign boiler design and manufacturing companies demonstrated and promoted their environment friendly products.

The traditional centralized heating systems in north China is on the brink of decline, while individual heating systems based on families are becoming popular. This gives heating equipment suppliers around the world a new potential market to explore.

Capital's Labor Market Needs Talent

By Zhao Hongyi

Beijing's labor market is in need of skilled professionals, while unskilled workmen are finding more and more difficult to find jobs, concluded a market survey conducted by the Municipal Employment and Social Security Bureau this month.

A number of professionals are still needed, including salespersons, shop clerks, restaurant employees, middle- and top-level managers, computer professionals, construction engineers, financial and budget assistants, secretaries, art designers, public affairs designers and innovators, and various technical workers.



Photo by Chen Shuyi

The survey reveals that the demand for low skilled workers is declining, even in the categories mentioned above. Meanwhile, the demand for high quality professionals in these fields is high, but can hardly be met due to the lack of talents.

Imported Medicines Subject to Domestic Regulation

By Zhao Hongyi

Imported medicines will receive the same treatment as those produced domestically, according to the latest administration regularities on imported medicines proclaimed by the State Drug Administration. The new regulations will be applied from the beginning of December this year.

Imported medicines will be subject to the same random inspections as those produced domestically. The State Drug Administration will intensify its monitoring on all medicines available in the country's market, whether imported or not. Warnings will be issued, or import licenses will be revoked, for those imported medicines failing to meet the required standards.

As the new regulations stipulate, several types of foreign medicine are prohibited for importation, including those declined approval for registration in China, those with no concrete and effective results, and those with unstable qualities.

Family Account Books Collected by Museum



By Sun Ming

Yang Yanxiu, a 70-year-old woman from Shanghai, has contributed 20 account books detailing her family's income and expenditure over three and a half decades to the National Museum of Chinese Revolution this month.

According to the head of the museum's collections department Chen Yu, Yang's account books record each item of her family's income and expenditure over a period of 36 years, ranging from major purchases such as home electrical appliances to daily necessities such as salt, sugar, vegetables.

Although the details in the account books might seem quite trivial, they provide a valuable record that reflects the changes and development of Chinese society in the late 20th century. The improvement of living standards, changes in consumption patterns and fluctuations in the prices of various consumer goods are all vividly illustrated in the journals. In order to plan the family's finances, Yang started keeping records in May 1965. At that time, her family was in debt for 1,500 yuan. By the end of 1973, Yang had paid off all the debt. In the April 1980, Yang borrowed 264 yuan to buy a black-and-white TV set, which cost 456 yuan. In March 1987, Yang's family opened its first bank savings account with 1,000 yuan. In 2000, on her seventieth birthday, she bought herself a platinum necklace, costing 1,010 yuan. All this data clearly reflects the improvement in the Yang family's lifestyle.

Yang says she will continue keeping financial records until she is unable to. When that time comes, she will again contribute them to the National Museum of Chinese Revolution History.



No, it's not trick photography, just 4 of the 80 pairs of twins participating in the Tourism Festival Parade

Photo by Mao Qian

80 pairs of twins gather for parade

By Wang Dandan

66 pairs of twins gathered at the Jintai Hotel on August 26 to participate in a parade on Ping'an Avenue, part of the Fourth Beijing International Tourism Festival.

The parade will consist of 80 pairs of twins, the youngest of whom are only one year old, while the oldest are over 70.

With the exception of one pair who are from Taiwan, the twins are all from Beijing. They are harmonious not only in appearance, but in their behavior as well.

Two five year old sisters named Liuliu and Jiujiu, performed three programs and won high praise from the audience.

At the performance, 80 pairs of twins will be march in four columns, with some versatile twins playing musical instruments and others demonstrating martial arts.

A Busy Retirement



Volunteer guide Chen Guantao tells visitors about the Lama Temple

Photos by Su Wei

By Su Wei

"Do you know what it is?" 71-year-old Chen Guantao asks a young man kowtowing in front of a Buddha, pointing at the statue at the Yonghegong Lamasery.

Chen was a director of the Lamasery administration office from 1980 to 1985 and retired in 1992 from the Beijing Nationalities Affairs Bureau. After his retirement, he immediately started looking for ways to keep himself busy as a tour guide.

"I was wondering what I could do after the retirement. Wandering the streets with birds in cages or playing Chinese chess didn't really appeal to me."

While director of the Lamasery administration office, Chen noticed that few tourists understood the cultural significance of the artifacts in the temple, and even tour guides often gave incorrect information. So Chen set himself the task of providing clear and accurate explanations about the exhibits to tourists. Chen has been voluntarily coming to the temple twice a day almost every

day since he retired. From 9 am till midday, he talks about the temple and its contents to anyone who cares to listen. He returns at 2 pm and begins the routine again until almost 5 pm.

"When I hear tourists making comments in the temple, I ask them what their opinion is. Sometimes people reply that the temple is good, though they are not sure how exactly".

At first, maybe only two or three tourists follow Chen. But then more are attracted by his interesting explanations, until there are perhaps thirty people, crowded around, including some from tourist groups and some tourist guides.

Gao Yang, a tourist from Henan, says she has been to many other tourist attractions, and taken part in some tourist groups. However, she considers Chen's explanations to be quite different from those made by most tourist guides. "Most of the tourist guides only tell us what it is and what it looks like, and then we are allowed to take photos as we like. But Chen not only tells us the background, but also combines the history and the

present situation together." Gao says Chen's words are simple but interesting, easy to understand, but full of deep meaning."

Lin Chaowen, a teacher from Zhejiang, abandoned his tour group and followed Chen. "His explanation is more colorful, that is, he combines the official history with the unofficial!"

Chen believes giving something to others is much better than asking for something from others. He said if he has something else to do and can not come to the temple, he will feel unsettled. "For me, it is both an obligation as well as an entertainment." Chen has also made friends with some of the tour guides. "They sometimes ask their charges to look around the temple on their own, and they themselves follow me. After hearing my explanations, they often make an appointment with me or ask for my telephone number for further contact."

Zhang Liang, a tour guide in a small company says, "Chen's explanations are of value to all the tourists, including the guides themselves".

New attraction to foreigners: the vegetable market

By Wenlong

Beijing is just a fantastic city to be in; even the vegetable markets attract lots of foreign visitors.

Tourism companies in Beijing operate tours of courtyards and the vegetable markets to satisfy the curiosity of the visitors.

On August 16, tourists first visited common people living within courtyards in the Xuanwu District. There with the help of translators, they asked the dwellers about their daily life. Then they went shopping with them for vegetables at a local market. Travellers helped them bargain with the sellers, check the weight and even carry their shopping for them.

Officials from the tourism company said that such kinds of home visits are popular among foreigners because it shows the essence of the life of typical Beijing residents.



Tourists take a look at a local market

Photo by Qiu Binbin



Tailors for Pets

By Su Wei

A special counter at Daxin Textile Shop in Xinjiekou Street opened a few months ago, offering a tailoring service exclusively for dogs. Lu Guisheng, the Manager of Guide Clothing Making Company initiated the idea.

"Early this year, I saw a pet clothing shop had opened in Wuhan, and I considered it a rare opportunity for our company to develop its business" says Lu. "It is quite different making clothes for animals. We have to consider the different varieties of dogs, for different varieties of dogs have different length fur, and their bodies are differently proportioned."

Since there are few books dealing with clothes designing for animals, Lu searched the Internet and magazines for photos of pets wearing different kinds of clothes. He recalls how in the first several weeks, he bought materials to make the clothes and tried them out on his neighbor's dog. His neighbor tells "Each time Lu designed a new piece, he tried it on Shuaishuai, my dog. I could tell that Shuaishuai was happy to be his model, for he jumped and wagged his tail in the new clothes."

Lu offers various kinds of pet clothes, such as topcoat, waistcoat, cape and so on. There is also a choice of materials, such as linen, seersucker, and silk. Most customers are content to listen to the tailor's suggestion about the design, and Lu has already made outfits from more than 40 customers.

It usually takes about one week to finish an outfit of pet clothes, and the design and cutting-out take up most of the time. Lu is confident his new business will prove to be a success, and he believes the service he offers is a sign of improved living standards.

NEWS IN BRIEF

By Sun Ming/Wang Dandan

★ The expert panel of the Beijing Forestry Bureau passed a research report on the construction of a national forest park in Badaling on August 23. This means that Beijing will soon have its first ecological park along the Great Wall.

★ As of August 23, the CITIC Industrial Bank is providing credit guarantees for people who want to go abroad at their own expenses. This is the first bank in China permitted to provide such credit guarantees.

★ The Tonghuang section of the Sixth Ring Road opened on August 25. The 200km Sixth Ring Road will be the longest city ring road in China when complete.

★ The two month renovation of the Hall of Memorial Ceremony at the Temple of Heaven has been completed and the hall reopened to the public on August 25.

★ Over 60 copper drums unearthed in Guangxi, Yunnan and Guizhou will go on show at the China Historic Museum on August 28.

Pregnant Silence

Parents to attend sex education classes

By Chen Ying

Starting tomorrow, more than 7,000 parents plus 13-year-old and 16-year-old students will attend separate sex education classes as part of a pilot project instituted by Xuanwu District education authorities. Grade-one junior and senior middle school teachers can adopt different methods, including videos, games, discussions and lectures.

If everything goes smoothly, the concept will be replicated across all the city's middle schools.

In China today, there are more than 300 million adolescents. About 20 million persons enter puberty annually. Sexual crimes form 18-25 percent of all crimes among juveniles.

For the last few decades, discussion of sexual issues in public was beyond taboo in China. To change this attitude, almost overnight, will need parental guidance and society-wide adjustments in attitude. A noncommittal attitude from parents exacerbates the situation.

In a grade two class (14-year-olds) at a Hangzhou city middle school, classmates gathered daily to read a book during self-study time. When their supervisor asked what they were reading, a student often replied he didn't know or made an excuse to leave. One day, the teacher surprised the students and found the book: "for the newly married couple". As a standard publication not "forbidden to juveniles," the teacher worried about an appropriate response. The teacher's report worried school officials.

Hangzhou Education Committee had the previous year decided to introduce sex education in all city middle schools. Some schools worried about misunderstandings with the students' parents. A parent meeting invited opinions. Rather more than a few parents objected to sex edu-

ation at grade one of junior middle school. They had many reasons: children mustn't know this knowledge; it is unnecessary to teach the course as children would know after they grow up; children are too small to learn this knowledge; it will encourage children to pay too much attention to sex. After "careful" consideration, Hangzhou postponed the classes.

The situation in Beijing is somewhat different. Most parents remain willing to cooperate with schools. But it takes time. Opinions follow:

Annie, Jieshi Internet bar employee, just back to China after studies in Canada

I had a close friend who died of AIDS last year. She was 23 years old. She had a relationship with her Hong Kong boss. After the breakup, she said she felt strange. But she ignored it. It was all too late when she finally had a checkup and found she had AIDS. Before she died, she said this would never have happened if she had adopted the correct measures. What happened to her came about through a lack of sex education. When I came back from Canada, I tried to persuade my employer to propagate sex education among teenagers through the Internet.

As I know, it is a required course at each Canadian university. The professors even use visual aids to teach.

Beijing Children's Hospital spokesman

Adolescence is moving younger more than ever in Beijing. Some children hit puberty at 11 years old, even 8 years old now instead of no young-



er than 12 years old in the past. Thirty percent of high-scoring students in primary schools exhibit signs of sexual maturity. Female puberty reaches peaks in grade one junior middle school, while for males it is in grade two of junior middle school. Registration among junior middle schools shows 40 percent of students don't know what is menstruation or an emission. Most children don't know they have the ability to give birth or about menstruation or emissions.

Gao Dewei, professor, biology department of Capital Normal University, and team leader, Beijing Sexual Education Research Group

In fact, a human being's sexual awareness begins at 2 years old. At that time, children are curious to know something about sex just like they want to know many other things. This curiosity is different from an adult sexual curiosity. In handling sexual questions from children,

parents' reactions usually involve three stages. First, they are surprised their baby could ask such a question. Then they worry about how to deal with it. Finally, they chide the child or give the child a slap. This action harms the child. They associate sex with something sinful. Improper sex education can cause many problems such as psychological barriers and sexual impotency when children grow up.

Sex education has two important stages—age 2 to 3 and adolescence. Chinese sex education lags far behind.

There are two reasons: the first lies in the traditional sexual mores which have shackled Chinese for thousands

of years; the second is that society pays little attention to pre-school sexual education and lacks an understanding of its importance.

Sun Yunxiao, deputy director, Chinese Youth Research Group

Teenagers should receive sex education before adolescence. Grade two and three of the primary school are the best time to carry out sex education. At that time, having a conversation about a penis, a vagina, and a uterus is just like talking about a cup to students. They are all just so much knowledge to the children.

Lou Jiaojiang, professor, Wuhan University

Beginning sex education from kindergarten can be put into practice as well as theory. But the key point lies in improving parents' and teachers' knowledge of sex and creating a suitable environment to develop sex education.

Ning Lihui, employee of an engineering company

I think sex education is far from sufficient in China today. Children want to know everything about sex and yet they can't obtain the knowledge, which they really want to know. So they will get this knowledge through improper means, such as surfing the Internet for sex sites or reading books that belong in adult categories. The more they want to know, the more the deterioration in their received ideas and attitudes. Sex education really needs reform. Besides the cooperation of parents and schools, textbooks are also very important. It should present straightforward information to children instead of the usual nonsense and tedious contents.

Ma Jun, vice principal, Beijing No.105 middle school in Haidian, also mother of a 2-year-old boy

There is no similar curriculum in Haidian District. As I see it, correct sex education is definitely necessary. If we just insert knowledge into students' minds, and do nothing to instruct them about morality, then I can't imagine what would happen.

During the 1950s, the Swiss carried out sex education in the whole country. After this action, the sex crime rate increased rapidly.

As a mother, I also worry about how to teach my child about sex. If the Xuanwu District really organizes the parents to learn such knowledge, I wonder how many times the lessons will be held in a semester; how in-depth the lessons will be and how the schools deal with the absent parents.

You know the absent parents may lack communication with their children, and these children may experience problems and not know where to turn. For my part, I would rather exchange information with my child in an indirect way.

Photo by Chen Ying

SOUND BITES

"Globalization is going to proceed and you can't stop it even if you want to. But you cannot have a global economy unless you also have a global economic empowerment policy, a global health care policy, a global education policy, a global environmental policy and a global security policy."

—Former US President Bill Clinton talked to 400 students and faculty members at Sao Paulo's Armando Alvares Penteado University

"With this action plan, we want to regenerate the company. We tackled the jobs in Japan because we must increase overseas production."

—Toshiba President Tadashi Okamura, after Toshiba announced it would cut 17,000 jobs domestically, while expanding output overseas

"I love playing in England and I like the English mentality. But I am German, I love my country and so of course my heart tells me I want Germany to win. But even if my heart says Germany, my head tells me England can do it."

—German international and Liverpool player Markus Babbel on the World Cup showdown against his countrymen in Munich tomorrow night

By Andy/Chen Ying

北京青年报
BEIJING TODAY
今日北京

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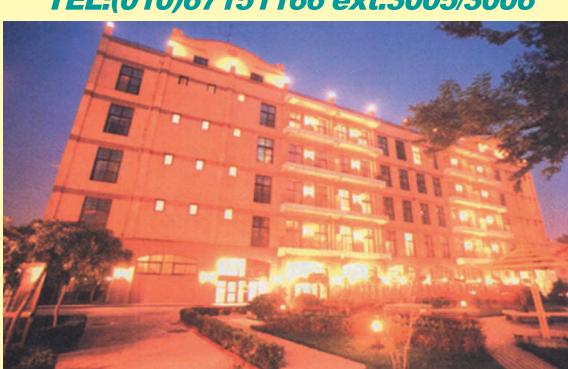
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I.O.C. President Jacques Rogge answered questions at the Universiade News Center, accompanied by I.O.C. Sports Director Gilbert Felle (right) and Beijing Vice-Mayer Liu Jingmin (middle). Photo by Cheng Tieliang

Constructive and Fruitful Trip

I.O.C. President Gives Beijing Thumbs-Up for 2008



Making a personalized postcard, under the guidance of a volunteer Jiang Yi (center)
Photo by Cindy Lee

By Cindy Lee

"I had an excellent stay in Beijing," said newly elected I.O.C. President Jacques Rogge, before flying out of the 2008 Olympic Games host city on Tuesday.

Rogge also gave high marks both for Beijing's organizing of the ongoing 21st Universiade and the preparations for the 2008 Olympics during his two-day visit.

Arriving Monday morning and leaving the following afternoon, Rogge carried out a rapid inspection of certain sports venues, the Athletes' Village as well as some of the competitions of the Universiade Games.

Rogge's trip is regarded as a test of Beijing's capacity to host the 2008 Olympic Games, as the ongoing Universiade is the first global multi-sports event to be held in Beijing since the city was awarded the Games on July 13 in Moscow.

Talking about the impressions he gained during his two-day stay, Rogge said it was the "complete package" that impressed him so much about the city.

"It is the quality of people, the expertise, the support of the government, the geography of the

city, the strength of the Chinese sports and Chinese tradition," said the I.O.C. President.

At a brief news conference given at the airport before he flew to Switzerland, Rogge told reporters that he had had the honor of having an audience with President Jiang Zemin during his stay in Beijing.

He also had meetings with people involved in the organization of the 2008 Olympics, which he described as very constructive and fruitful. He added that he was very much impressed by what he had seen and by his discussions with the future organizers.

Rogge voiced his satisfaction with the preparatory work underway in Beijing. "You have worked a lot. During the meeting this morning, we realized that a lot of preparations have been under way."

He also promised that the I.O.C. would give the organizing committee its full support. "The reason for that is that each Olympic organizer must start from zero and has no chance to rehearse and has no experience, because this is something you organize once in a lifetime."

Asked to comment on Beijing's preparations for the Olympics, Rogge said that the role of the I.O.C. is to help, not to criticize the Olympic host city. "In the beginning, there is no reason to give criticism. In the beginning nothing is done yet," he said.

The I.O.C. here is to help, to support. We are here as partners. So you will not hear criticism. You will hear advice and counseling, but mainly the spirit is one of partnership and support."

Regretfully that his busy schedule did not allow him to stay longer in Beijing, (Rogge is due to officiate at the opening of the Mediterranean Games on September 2), the I.O.C. President said he would have many opportunities to come to Beijing in the future, and that he looked forward to coming back to China.

"It is the quality of people, the expertise, the support of the government, the geography of the



In the Athletes' Village, accompanied by I.O.C. Executive Member He Zenliang (2nd from left)



Meeting with a Belgian athlete in the Village



Inspecting the Capital Sports Stadium



Signed a guest book in the Village

Photos by Cindy Lee

Q&A with I.O.C. President

Mr. President, how do you like the feeling of being the President of the International Olympic Committee?

Frankly speaking, I have had no time to reflect on that, only the duties of the I.O.C. Maybe one day I will say well, happy, unhappy... I do not know. I will tell you later, but today I have no time to reflect on myself. I am a man focusing on the present and future, rather than the past.

Mr. President, why don't you stay here a bit longer, since there are so many places, like the Great Wall, you haven't visited yet?

Unfortunately I could not stay any longer. I have lots of things to do in the other parts of the world. In a few days' time I will be in Tunis for the opening of the Mediterranean Games. After that I will be in Toronto for the preparations for the Winter Games. Anyway I will have many opportunities to come to Beijing and one day I think I can see you again.

You have so busy a schedule. Do you still have time to be a surgeon?

I have no time, so I give up practicing surgery. Now I am a full-time President. It is a passion. I love to fulfill my passion.

Mr. President, have you found any similarities or differences between the two—a surgeon and the President of the I.O.C.?

Lots of differences. When I operated I had the mask over my mouth and I didn't speak. Now, I speak all the time.

Former I.O.C. President Juan Antonio Samaranch knows Chinese athlete Deng Yaping very well and has praised her highly. Do you know any Chinese athletes personally?

I just had a meeting this morning with your champion table-tennis player Deng Yaping and had a discussion with her. So I know her very well.

I don't know others personally. I know them by name, or their competitions and I am very much impressed by their competitions at championship level.

By Cindy Lee

Youngster in Head-on Culture Clash

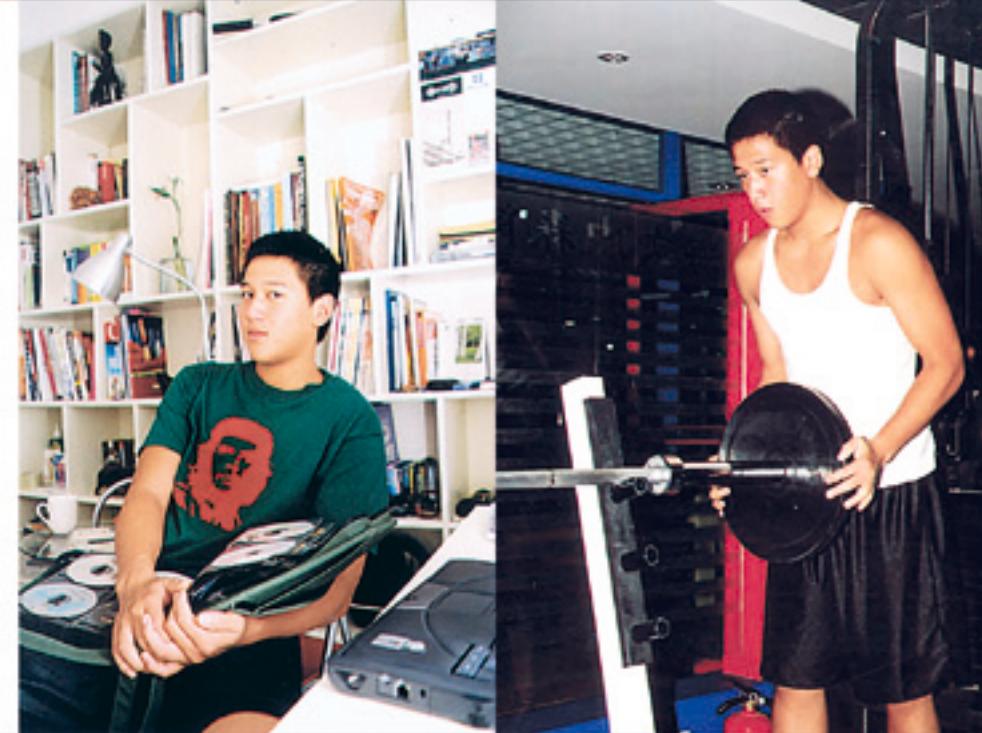
"Yes, I am an artist, but a very young artist that still has a lot to learn. I do a lot of quick sketches in my free time to practice the flow of my hands and to train my eyes and mind. I go for skill first because the learning of skill is just to get a very important idea into your head and to build that idea upon your imagination and your thoughts. If I don't have these skills I will never become an artist and a designer as I wish to, therefore life has no meaning to me."

After I graduate I plan to go back to China and go to Tibet: there my mind will be calm. I can free my thoughts. After that everything will be easy and clear to me. I will never be satisfied with my skills because I will keep on learning until the day I die."

James Shi, June 1998



Painted by James Shi



By Zhu Lin

James Shi was born in Beijing in 1983, and went to Canada on September 12, 1992 with his parents. He remembers that day very clearly. "Yeah, a turning point in my life, of course!" He nodded, raising his thick eyebrows. Now he has come back to Beijing. From September, he will be studying at the Central Institute of Arts and Crafts.

After staying in Canada and America for nine years, he's acquired the distinctive manner of American students. The typical American way of shrugging and humming assurance, and the typical American way of dressing are part of his being.

School of Hard Knocks

On the first day of school in Canada, James was beaten up. Even today he still doesn't know why the guy beat him. Maybe it was because he looked like a shy little girl; maybe because he wore a white T-shirt with a teddy bear on it, like a "fruit cake", as he put it. Kong, a tall boy with long hair chose him as a target. The 15 boys and girls around him cheered him on and laughed. "Come on! Kick him again! Give him a bloody nose!" Staggering back home with a bloody nose and black eye, he cried in his parents' arms. Such a harrowing experience made him realize he was too weak, and really in need of self-defense.

The first stage was to learn martial arts through movies rented by his dad. He practiced jumps, kicked the wall and punched the door. The first movie he watched was Bruce Lee's "Jing Wu Men", popular both in China and the West.

He used to practice boxing everyday for bodybuilding. "I also keep fit for the ladies!" He shrugged, giving a sophisticatedly humorous look. One of the most important things he learnt from Americans was that everyone did body building. "But in China, very few people build their bodies. They don't care..." he paused, trying to find a proper word, "I don't want to say they don't care. But really, people here are very different, a different culture."

Ghost Call to Grand mom

When James first got Canada, he was only nine years old and didn't know much. He didn't have any friends, and couldn't speak English. He felt lonely. In addition, his family had to save every penny to pay for their apartment. James had been brought up by his Grand mom in Beijing. Living in a different place without any knowledge of English, he felt lonely and missed home. During Spring Festival in 1992, James wanted to call his Grand mom very much. But since his parents were worried about an expensive telephone call, they didn't tell him how to get

through to China. On the morning of that Spring Festival, when James's parents were still asleep, they heard James's voice, "Grand mom, how are you? I miss you so much! Is it snowing in Beijing...?" "Who told him the code number?" His parents were surprised and quickly ran into James's room. They were worried that the nine-year-old boy would run up a huge phone bill. His father took the phone from James by force, shouting, "Do you know how much we have to pay?" But when he put his ear to the phone, all he could hear was the monotonous dialing tone. James didn't know how to call his Grand mom at all. He was pretending to speak to her.

His parents sobbed. "Let's call Grand mom at once, honey!" But since it was during Spring Festival, millions of people were calling China. They tried the whole day, but the lines were always busy.

Friends in the Global Village

In Bellevue High School, Seattle, where James was studying, a lot of Asian people just kept to their own social circles. They formed a group and seldom made friends with other groups. In fact, he was the only Chinese in his school to hang out with different nationalities of people. He made friends with Europeans, Africans and Mexicans, but very few Chinese. They didn't hate him, he supposed, but seldom talked to him.

James always wants to make more friends. In America, both he and other people approach each other to make the first move. "But here, people never make the first move to me," he shook his head, "I don't know why."

When he's walking on the street in Beijing, his clothes look strange to Chinese people. "Little hoodlum," people passing him sometimes murmur, staring at him. But he says he can understand it because people here aren't that open-minded.

There's a lovable kind of arrogance that sparkles in his eyes, the kind one can only find in young men around 18 years old.

A Worried Father

James's father has a deep understanding of both Chinese and Western culture. He's proud of his son, but also has concerns. "I don't think James is capable of deciding what's good and what's bad. I still have the responsibility to guide him! Some of the fashions he's following aren't healthy at all." Like most American young people, James has a strong sense of democracy, and values his right to do things freely.

The August before last, James came back to China for his summer vacation. He decided to have his hair dyed purple. Maybe no big deal in the west, but few Chi-

nese people would regard it normal. Unfortunately, his father found out about his intentions, and caught him at the barber shop. James's hair had already turned purple. "That's disgusting!" James's father shouted. Not only to his son, but also to the barber, "Don't you know he's only a child and needs his parents' permission to do this?" James's head was full of American notions of freedom. Of course he wasn't used to listening to him as a Chinese son might do. "My body is mine. I can do whatever I like to it!" He protested. But his father couldn't accept it. He slammed the door, uttering a harsh warning, "If you don't remove this absurd color, you are not my son anymore!" Finally James yielded to his father. He paid the same amount of money, to have his hair turned back to black. His father was softened a little by James coming to him a few hours later and saying, "I'm sorry, Dad."

This summer, James's father was up in arms again when he noticed piercing in James's lip, tongue and ears. "I can't bear that!" He cried, but James wasn't too bothered, "In America, people wear whatever they like. No one cares what other people wear. My father is just a little conservative." At last, James made a compromise. When he goes to his father's house, he will take off the earrings.

Now James and his father are on their way traveling around Shandong Province, Tibet and other places in China. It's the first time for James to travel around China. During the last three years, James's father has been too busy to take good care of him. Just at the time when boys need their father's guidance the most.

"I'm so sorry for that. Now I want to make it up." After moving his family between two cultures over the past nine years, the 45-year-old man has maybe lost his sharp sense of judgment.



Photos by Wang Zhong/Wang Lichen

Ancient Roots Hold Capital's Secrets

By Miao Yajie / Zhang Jia

Ancient Trees

A common view holds that ancient trees do not mean old trees. Old trees refer to trees with long years of growth and they may grow of themselves and perish deep in the mountains or forests. When it comes to ancient trees, it means that the trees are not only at least 100 years old but also of historical, cultural, and economic value. They are historical relics and a part of the culture. At present, there are 22,637 ancient trees belonging to 29 species, of which 3,804 are over 300 years old. Beijing is a modern metropolis with the largest number of ancient trees in the world. Famous trees are rare, treasured species of trees, trees planted as a memento or a token of friendship, or trees planted by famous persons.

Ancient Trees Are Living Historical Relics

Xu Beihong, a master painter of modern Chinese painting, once accompanied one of his works with an inscription describing the ancient trees. He wrote, "Beijing is a capital city with the largest number of ancient trees in the world. There are especially numerous cypresses with twisted roots and gnarled branches planted since the Liao (916-1125), Jin (1115-1234), Yuan (1271-1368), and Ming (1368-1644) dynasties. They have gone through vicissitudes of the ages and are still growing luxuriantly, forming a unique feature of the capital city."

As historical relics, the ancient trees have a tenacious vitality and integrate natural with man-made landscapes. The study of the history of ancient trees in Beijing is of great importance to the study of the history of the city's civilization, the development of the urban infrastructure, and its political ups and downs.

The ancient trees bear witness to history. The Chinese scholar trees at Huafang (Painted Boat) Studio in Beihai Park, which were planted during the Tang Dynasty (618-907), and the Jiulong (Nine-Dragon) Pine inside the Jietai Temple built during the reign of Emperor



Lianli Cypresses in the Forbidden City

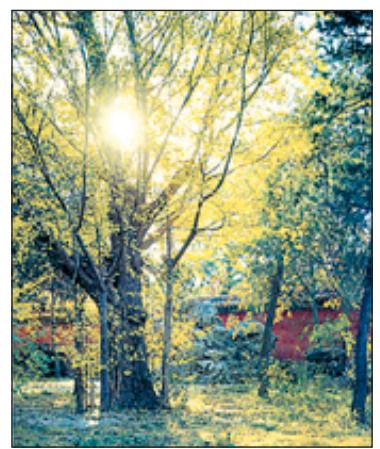
Gaozong (618-626) of the Tang regime are more than 1,000 years old.

The cypresses now towering outside the southern gate of the Sheji (Land and Grain) Altar in Zhongshan Park were from the Xingguo Temple of the Liao Dynasty. The ginkgo tree in front of the Vairocana Temple at the Tanzhe Temple was believed to be planted 1,000 years ago. It is called the Diwang Tree (the Emperor of Trees). Other ancient trees in Beijing include the lacebark pine known as Baipao Jiangjun (the General in White Robe) on the Tuancheng (Round City), a structure from the Jin Dynasty, in Beihai Park, the time-honored cypresses from the Yuan Dynasty at the Temple of Confucius, the stretch of cypresses from the Ming Dynasty in The Temple of Heaven, and Chinese pines of the Qing Dynasty at the Summer Palace.

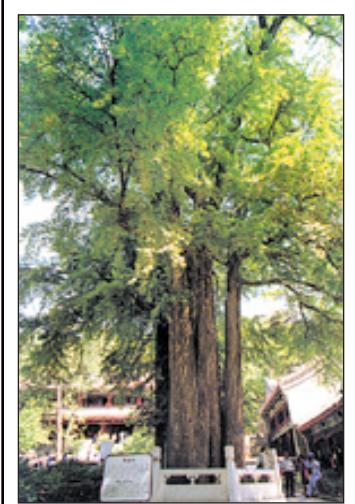
The famous trees and vines in the Chinese capital are like poems and paintings. Some are bold, unconstrained, and vigorous, others are charming, graceful, and refined. They look impressive. For instance, the Lianli Cypresses (Two Cypresses with Interlocking Branches) in the Forbidden City, the Baota (Embracing-the-Pagoda) Pine at Jietai Temple, and the Tingfa (Listening-to-the-Buddhist-Lecture) Pine in front of Xiangshan Temple.

The Nine-Dragon Cypresses of the Liao Dynasty in The Temple of Heaven

The trees look as if there are dragons coiling around their trunks, a result of the variability that has taken place in the process of the trees' cell division. These magnificent, dignified, and vigorous cypresses by the side of the Huiyin (Echo) Wall have attracted people's interest and hold an important position in the classical park. Dr. Kissinger, the former U. S. State Secretary, said that the United States could build a Hall of Prayer for Good Harvest by modeling the one in The Temple of Heaven, but it was impossible for the country to get ancient trees like those in the park.

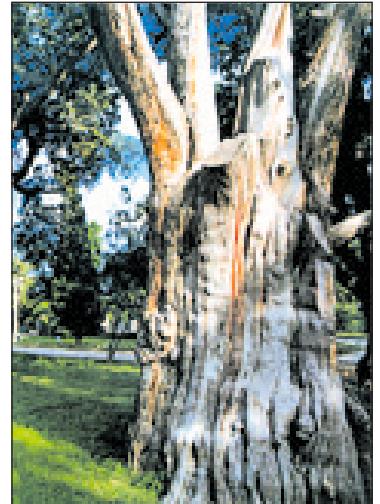


Ginkgo Tree at Cining Garden, Forbidden City Photo by Hu Chui



The Emperor of Trees at the Tanzhe Temple

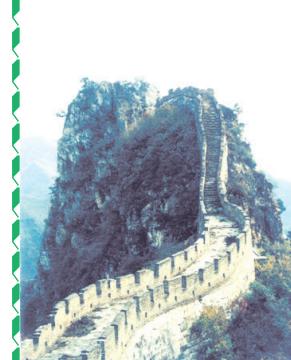
The construction of the Tanzhe Temple was earlier than that of Beijing. Trees at the temple are witnesses to the changes in Beijing. The Emperor of Trees is, in fact, a 1,000-year-old ginkgo tree. It stands more than 30 meters high and its trunk requires seven people to join hands to surround it. It is said that whenever an emperor succeeded to the throne, the tree put out a new trunk. In the course of time, the new trunks joined the main trunk. It grew a new trunk during the reign of Emperor Xuantong, at the end of the Qing Dynasty. It was Emperor Qianlong of the Qing Dynasty who gave it the name the Diwang (Emperor) of Trees.



Cypresses of the Liao Dynasty in Zhongshan Park

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A Literal Banquet of Taste

by Zhao Hang

Nobody knew the given name of Old Mai. Mai is his surname. He would be well over 100 years old if he were still around in this world.

For as long as I remember, I knew Old Mai. He was from Guangdong Province. He was about 1.85 meters tall, and few people from that part of the country, as I know, grow that tall. At that time, I was a small child and I always felt like looking up at a high mountain whenever I met him. He was a man in his 60s, with deep eye sockets, a big mouth, and projecting lips, typical characteristics of the people in Guangdong. Maybe because he was so tall that he was hunchbacked.

The zongzi Old Mai prepared were quite different from those made in Beijing. Those made by him were wrapped in bamboo leaves, larger, and in the shape of a square or an axe, while those made in Beijing were wrapped in reed leaves. Those with ham and meat stuffing were three times

Old Mai did not own a restaurant, but he had more than 100 customers in Beijing. He had an

Zongzi Sold by Old Mai

old but perfectly good bicycle with two iron buckets hanging on either side of the luggage carrier. This was his "movable shop." The two buckets were filled with food including zongzi (dumplings made of glutinous rice wrapped in bamboo leaves). From the early 1950s to the early 1960s, he came to sell zongzi and other food in Beijing twice a year, once before the Dragon Boat Festival and the other time before Chinese Spring Festival.

Old Mai was optimistic and friendly. He went from door to door and delivered to his regular customers the food he prepared himself. He was confident of his cooking skills and would be angry with people who raised objections to the quality and price of his food. He thought his food was top quality. He was proud of his customers. "I've more than 100 customers," he often said.

The food Old Mai prepared was really good. When the Spring Festival approached, he came to Beijing and brought chicken stuffed with glutinous rice, eight-jewel rice pudding, and other food I have forgotten. Before the Dragon Boat



by Zhao Hang

Yi Yin said, "The exquisite-
ness of taste or flavor is beyond
verbal description." The descrip-
tion of food and drink by words
can only achieve an effect similar
to that by the ears and eyes. It
is impossible to share the sense
of taste with others and, be-
sides, people have different expe-
rience.

The Chinese character “味” and the English word “taste” convey the same meaning. It is hard to give them an accurate definition. It is for people to understand an experience themselves.

We know "Food is the first necessity of people." But most of us regard food as a basic need for existence. We all have a desire for good food but are ashamed

for good food but are ashamed of talking glibly about it. People in ancient times warned, "Men of noble characters should keep themselves away from the kitchen." For a period in modern China, the pursuit of material pleasure was regard-

bourgeois way of life. Writings about food and drink were considered bad taste except for those about cooking skills or nutrition.

I am fond of good food. I styled myself on Lao Tao, meaning a man who is greedy for food. In my spare time, I jotted down notes on food. They were not really writings but tittle-tattle for self-appreciation. Later, under the encouragement of my friends, I edited the fragmentary writings into a book entitled The Literary Rambling of Lao Tao.

I lived in a special environment and had an experience different from that of my peers

ferent from that of my peers during the 1950s and 1960s. I might have known more in certain aspects of life, which I still remember. Later, because of my family and my work, I had chances to associate with quite a few seniors and enjoy the great benefit of their knowledge and instructions. That is why there is a sharp contrast between the rambling and my actual age.

Because it is a book containing casual writings and because of the limited food I have eaten, partiality is unavoidable in the content. The stories in the book happened years ago and some of them I have forgotten. There must be omissions. To this end, the understanding and forgiveness of the readership are hereby requested.

Zongzi

Zongzi is a pyramid-shaped dumpling made of glutinous rice wrapped in bamboo or reed leaves which is eaten during the Dragon Boat Festival.

(Zhang Jing)

Photo by Cui Jun
Picture by Xie Feng

The image features a vibrant orange gradient background with large, white, blocky Chinese characters '生活' (Life) in the center-left. To the right, there is a white rectangular area containing text. The top part of this text is in yellow, followed by black text, and the bottom part is in purple. The overall design is clean and modern.

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Rural Laborers Given Center Stage

By Xiao Li

Stripped to the waist and merrily singing folk songs, 30 rural laborers awkwardly but excitedly danced with 10 professional dancers in a 2000 m² abandoned textile mill near the fourth ring road in a behaving art show.

The audience was free to walk around, following the dancers. This performance, called *Dance with Rural Laborers*, was held on the evening of August 23.

With the dark cement ground, massive columns and huge reinforced bars on the roof, the performing site retained the primitive layout of a textile mill. It was further decorated with 13 old sewing machines and petrol drums that night. The mill will be rebuilt into a modern art

center in the near future.

The 30 rural laborers, all builders in a construction site and usually regarded as people living on the fringes of society, occupied the leading role in this show.

After 8 days' training, the laborers' movements were still not perfectly in sync with the professionals. The professional dancers communicated with the laborers through their expressive body language, yet put them at the center of the performance. Shouting, singing, dancing and waving torches, the 30 men seemed relaxed and excited before the audience.

It was hard to identify the form of this show. Whatever the conclusion, both the performers and the audience were deeply involved with each other on this special evening.



Photo provided by Ocean Shipping Art Center

Macbeth Enthuses

By Xiao Li

Against the trend of modernizing classics for the stage, the English Shakespeare Company from Great Britain brought its traditional production of *Macbeth* to



Photo by Cui Jun

Beijing from August 24 to 26.

Director Hilary Spiers believes that you don't have to employ modern settings or gimmicks to please the eye. The full text in the original was performed, thus allowing the audience more leeway to form their own judgments. Nevertheless, certain aspects of psychological expression were not as strong as they could have been.

The Scottish play was faithfully reproduced giving Chinese audiences a valuable opportunity to meet Shakespeare at first hand.

The Italian writer Italo Calvino describes myth as the hidden part of every story, unexplored, "because there are as yet no words to enable us to get there." Tim Yip's *Of Heaven and Earth* which was staged at the Poly Theatre on Chinese Valentine's Day on July 7 of the lunar calendar (August 24), came closer to that secret part of every story, and by extension culture, by skillfully exploiting forms of modern dance.

The production is based on the legend of the heavenly weaver goddess and earthly shepherd. They fall deeply in love with each other, but have to live apart and meet only once a year in the Galaxy on the lunar July 7 according to the rule of the heaven. This legend later became the origin of China's own Valentine's Day.

Tim Yip, the 2000 winner of the Academy Award for Art Direction in the film *Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon*, gave the audience a fresh insight into the myth by mixing traditional art forms such as Beijing Opera and acrobatics with concepts from modern dance. With the transparent stage and screen depicting the various scenes of space and earth, Yip produced a dreamland that drew the audience into the real love story between the Weaver and Shepherd. With body painting and rippling costumes, the characters' identities seemed to merge with each other across the stage in a way that the confines of words would not allow. According to Yip, action in dance dramas are hard to innovate, so he used form to remedy this weak point since there is no dialogue in dance drama.

"This combination is really much more enjoyable than ordinary dance dramas and will present a new trend for dance dramas to meet modern society and international standards," Li Dequan, a retired stage art professor said excitedly after the play.

It seems that dance dramas are losing their original charisma due to the changing critical appreciation of modern audiences, while *Of Heaven and Earth* serves as a useful reference for today's makers of dance drama.

Photos by Zhuang Jian



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Massage away your worries

By Wang Dandan

Upon entering Doctor Song's Clinic, you feel the positive energies and sense the concern, expertise, and professionalism of the staff. They are a caring group of individuals dedicated to helping you heal naturally. Utilizing the ancient techniques of acupuncture and therapeutic massage, Deng Hua, a professional masseur, guides you in experiencing the power of your innate healing ability. Deng says he is constantly amazed by the healthy transformations that occur every day within the center, and hopes that more people will visit and have the opportunity to experience new health horizons in their life.



Photo by Chen Shuyi

What makes the center is its combination of acupuncture and therapeutic massage, which provides an excellent method for achieving and maintaining improved health. Acupuncture opens and balances the flow of energy within the body, allowing you to grasp and balance your "Qi" (vital energy), while therapeutic massage releases blockages and tension within the soft tissues of the body.

The center is not luxuriously decorated, nor is it ideally located. But what people come for is their health. Just put yourself on one of the simple but clean beds and relax. The prices are much cheaper than most other massage centers, because they do not have to pay as much rent as those located in the commercial areas. Also, Deng can speak a little English.

Add: Huangsidajie (黄寺大街), Rendinghu Beixiang (人定湖北巷).

Tel: 82012968; 13701275321.

New Classic Go Go Fish

By Jiao Pei

There are many shops in Beijing selling home wares; however Go Go Fish is worth searching out and making a special trip to.

Situated on the first floor of the Kylin Mansion, the entire shop is decorated in yellows and browns. On the wall near the entrance, there are over 100 versions of the Chinese character 'Yu' (fish). There are three types of goods on sale: lamps, pottery and cloth art. The lamps are modeled after antiques, with bases in the form of Buddhas, tea tables, abacuses, mahjong pieces, and so on.

Prices range from 400 to 3,000 yuan. 80% of the goods are designed by the shop owner, Zhao Jiayu (Angela Chao), who came to Beijing from Taiwan 10 years ago. She majored in enterprise

managing, and also used to be a playwright. When she first arrived here, she opened a shop with Sophie, of Sophie's Dinning Room (beside Chaoyang Park, see Beijing Today issue 1), before opening Go Go fish with a friend.

Angela says the traditional Chinese goods are stereotyped these days, and one can see same things both in the north and south of China. So she opened her own shop in order to add something new to the traditional arts and crafts. Her goal is to link the traditional with the technological. Around mid September, a second Go Go fish will open in Pacific Century Plaza (太平洋百货), where a larger range of goods will be available.

Add: west side of Kylin Plaza (麒麟大厦), north of Bella's (贝拉面包房). **Open:** 10am-8pm (summer); 10am-7pm(winter). **Tel:** 64173626.



Photo by Pan Zhongming

A bar with a view

By Yue Ming

Imagine a place where you can have a fantastic bird's-eye view of the Forbidden City in the twilight,

while sipping a cocktail and enjoying a little classical music.

No I'm neither dreaming nor sitting in a helicopter; I'm talking about the Top Terrace Bar of the Grand Hotel Beijing. Perhaps this is not the only place in town with such a grand view, but what

appeals to me most is the open-air atmosphere that brings a feeling of intimacy with nature.

The bar is spacious, measuring around 250 square meters and is enclosed by carved white marble walls. Two special cocktail parties were held recently on this ten-story high bar; one to back Beijing's bid for the 2008 Olympics, the other on the night of the Three Tenors' concert. People dressed in their best reveled till midnight. The bar offers both tra-

ditional Chinese and western drinks and snacks, or you can order something more substantial, in fact anything you like, from the menu of any of the hotel's restaurants.

The manager says there is no minimum charge, and guests can even take a rest here without ordering anything, a rare promise in such a five-star hotel. But it's unlikely that many could resist enjoying a glass of something special with such an enchanting backdrop.

Add: 35 East Chang'an Avenue, 10th floor, Beijing Grand Hotel. **Open:** from 6pm (May to October). **Tel:** 65137788.



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Li Ka-shing to invest 10 billion in Dongba

By Wang Dandan

Li Ka-shing, the Hong Kong property magnate, has announced a 10 billion yuan investment to develop 350 hectares in Dongba, Chaoyang District.

The contract is expected to be signed at the 2001 Chaoyang International Business Festival. Representatives of Li Ka-shing's Hutchison Wham-

poa say that a detailed plan of the development has not been worked out yet.

The Dongba area extends from Jinzhandonglu in the east to the Fifth Ring Road in the west, and Yaojiayuanlu in the south to Liangmahe Beilu in the north, covering an area of 3,600 hectares. At present, there are almost 11,000 families living in the vicinity.

150,000 are expected to set-

tle in Dongba after the completion of the project.

There are currently 1,700,000 people living in the inner city zone, with an average density of 28,000 people per square kilometer.

With the aim of relieving the residential pressure in the city, the government has designated 10 perimeter areas between Beijing city and the surrounding counties,

namely; Qinghe, Wangjing, Dongba, Dingfuzhuang, Faitou, Nanyuan, Fengtai, Shijingshan and Xiyuan. These areas are isolated from the city central areas by 'green belts'.

When all the housing projects are complete, the total number of families living in these areas will number over 2,000,000, greatly reducing the pressure on the inner city.

Apartment prices remain steady



Picture by Li Yue

By Wang Dandan

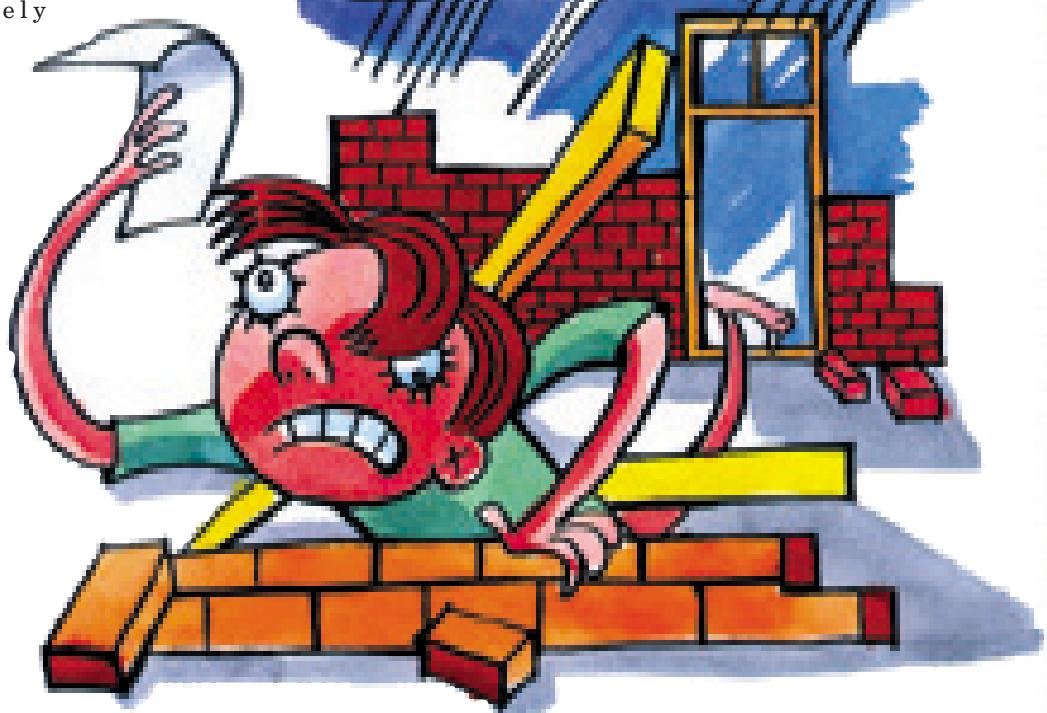
The average selling price of commodity apartments constructed by domestic enterprises was 4,358 yuan per square meter in July, down 111 yuan from June.

The average selling price of commodity apartments invested by foreigners and people from Taiwan and Hong Kong countries and regions was 7,021 per square meter, up 401 yuan from June.

Commodity apartments con-

structed by domestic enterprises accounted for 85.6% of the total number of apartments sold in Beijing.

Unless there is a rapid increase in the number of such apartments available, the price is expected to remain relatively steady.



Renting in the east

East Fourth Ring Road

By Wang Dandan

Today, we look at apartment prices around the east Fourth Ring Road, from the Siyuan Bridge in the north to the exit for the Jingtang expressway in the south.

Siyuan Bridge to Dongfeng Bridge

Prices around this area range from about 1,000 yuan for a simply decorated, fully furnished one-room apartment to 1,300 yuan for two room and 1,600 yuan for three rooms.

More elaborately decorated apartments might cost between 1,200 and 1,300 yuan for one room, and up to 1,500 yuan for two room. The air quality is quite good as there is an orchard nearby.

Dongfeng Bridge to Chaoyang Park Bridge

One room 900; two room 1,100; three room 1,400. Prices in this area are a little lower than on the northern side. A simply decorated, fully furnished one room apartment costs around 900 yuan, two room, 1,100 yuan and three room 1,400 to 1,500 yuan. Better quality apartments cost 1,200 yuan (one room) and 1,500 yuan (two room).

This area is not so convenient in terms of facilities such as shops and supermarkets, however, you can do your morning exercises in Chaoyang Park!

Chaoyang Park Bridge to Honglingjin Bridge

The Da Yuan Hotel, near the Summer Palace, is a large complex in the style of Chinese traditional garden. The hotel caters to both long or short-term guests and boasts extensive conference facilities. It is regularly used for meetings of the State Council.

Covering an area of 1.25 sq. km, there are six foreign guest buildings, with six luxury double rooms, 116 standard two-bed rooms, 10 meeting rooms, 3 restaurants, as well as a night club, small cinema, fitness center, billiard room, shops and business center. The conference building can be used for meetings

One room 1,000; two room 1,300; three room 1,600

The average price for a one-room apartment with simple decoration and full facilities is 1,000 yuan, two room 1,300 yuan and three room 1,600 yuan.

There is a large market selling construction materials nearby; handy for home decoration materials, but again, not so convenient for shopping and supermarkets.

Honglingjin Qiao to Dajiaoting Qiao

One room 1,000; two room 1,300; three room 1,500

This area is very convenient in terms of living and transportation. A one-room apartment costs around 1,000 yuan, two room 1,300 yuan and three room 1,500 yuan.

Proximity to the Jingtong expressway means there is a lot of coming and going nearby, raising possible security concerns.

Dajiaoting Qiao to Xiaowuji Bridge

One room 800; two room 1,000; three room 1,300

The average price for one room simply decorated and fully furnished is 800 yuan, two room 1,000 yuan and three room 1,300 yuan.

There are many auto repair shops nearby, useful if your car breaks down, but potentially noisy.

Property market excitement threatens real estate glut

By Wang Dandan

With China's impending entry to WTO, the real estate market is heating up. Some real estate developers seeking to take maximum advantage of the opportunity are increasing their investments without making careful calculations. Industry experts point out that real estate construction should maintain a steady pace to ensure continued growth.

The prospect of WTO entry excites

some real estate developers, with its promise of increasing demand. The success of the Olympic bid has further boosted confidence in the real estate market. Many are preparing to invest as much as they can in the market. Meanwhile, experts are reminding developers of the dangers of an over-heated market.

Jia Hai, director of the Fixed Asset Investment Department of the National Bureau of Statistics, says it is not appropriate to speed up the construction of buildings, as oversupply could cause prices to fall.

According to Jia, investment in commodity apartments accounts for 60% of the total amount of real estate investment, and the focus should be on readjusting the investment structure to direct more funds to economical and low-priced apartments, to cater to the needs of low-income families.

or to accommodate tour groups as well as individual guests. The restaurants serve Shandong, Sichuan and Cantonese cuisine, and the staff are highly experienced in all areas of banqueting and catering for conferences.

The Da Yuan Hotel was built in 1912. The traditional architecture is in the style of a southern Chinese garden. Walking along the long corridor to the pavilion on the small island provides a pleasant and peaceful escape. There is a piece of calligraphy from the Qing Dynasty in the garden and one can also see several pieces of "Tai Lake Rock" and "Stone Bamboo Shoot" making the garden even more attractive.

Add: Fuyuanmen No.1 Jia, Haidian.
Tel: 62561115
Price: 300/400 yuan for standard room

Beijing Hotel

By Wang Dandan

The Da Yuan Hotel, near the Summer Palace, is a large complex in the style of Chinese traditional garden. The hotel caters to both long or short-term guests and boasts extensive conference facilities. It is regularly used for meetings of the State Council.

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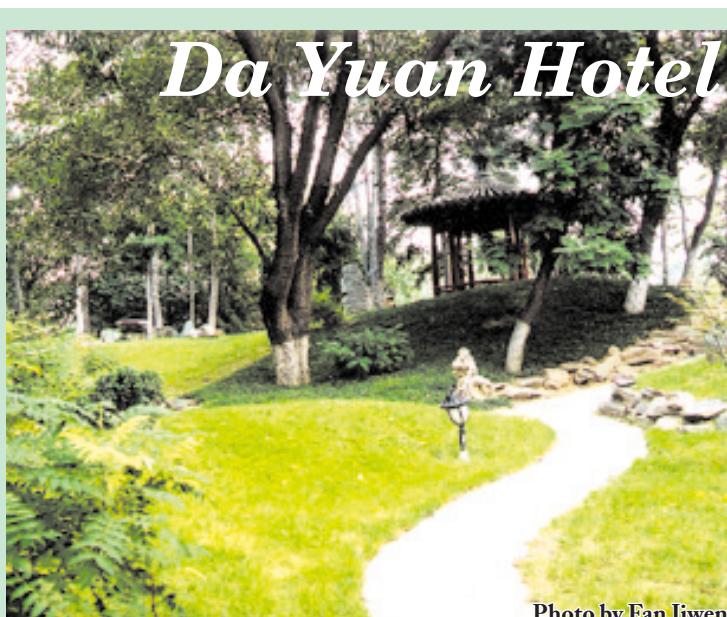


Photo by Fan Jiwen

Various real estate insurance

By Wang Dandan

There are a number of different types of insurance home buyers and owners are obliged to take out under certain situations. These cover construction insurance, real estate insurance, individual loan insurance, property insurance and real estate liability insurance.

Property Insurance

This insurance comes under the category of family property. It mainly guarantees against loss caused by fire, explosion, lightning strike or other natural or accidental causes.

Individual loan insurance

For the past several years, some commercial banks have offered loans that take houses as mortgage. In order to assure the benefits of loan holders and compensate them if the mortgaged house is damaged during the loan period, the commercial banks require purchasers to buy individual loan insurance.

Real estate liability insurance

If the house owner rents out a property, they must take out liability insurance to cover accidents or damage that occurs in the house.

Well, at least the lightning did not strike my insurance policy!

Picture by Li Yue

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Exhibitions**Oil Paintings in Beijing Autumn**

More than 30 works by Xiao Se, Sun Dingyu, Liu Fengye, and Yan Yu.

Where: Qin Gallery, A 38, Fangcaodi Beijie, Chaoyang District, bus 28, 43 or subway to Yong'anli.

When: Sep.1-Sep.7
Tel: 6586929

Art from Loess Plateau

Artist Jiang Zhixin was born and grew up on the Loess (Huangtu) Plateau. The scenery in the dry western region has a strong influence on his work.

Where: National Museum of Fine Arts (中国美术馆), 1 Wusidajie (五四大街), bus 104, 103, 108, 111 to Meishuguan.

When: Until Sep. 2, 9am-4pm
Tel: 64016234

Painting Exhibition

Contemporary artist Ma Baolin paints in a traditional Chinese style.

Where: Century Gallery, 40 Liangmaqiaolu, Chaoyang District, bus 300, 402 to Liangmaqiao.

When: Until Sep. 2
Tel: 64663311.

International Wine Exhibition

Wine lovers shouldn't miss this!

Where: China International Exhibition Center, bus 300 to Guozhan, Chaoyang District.

When: Sep. 4-Sep.7
Tel: 84602041

International Big Screen Exhibition

China Computer World Exposition

Where: China International Exhibition Center, 6 Beisanhuan Donglu, Chaoyang District.

When: September 5-8, 9am-4:30pm.
Tel: 84602070.

Sports Cartoon Labyrinth

Sponsored mainly by the Universiade Organizing Committee and Beijing Children's Palace, The exhibition shows 1,080 colorful cartoon figures representing tens of sports events

Where: 1F, Sun Dong An Market, 138 Wangfujing, Dongcheng District.

When: till August 30.
Admission: free.
Tel: 65276688.

1st Navy Art Works Exhibition

Where: Yuan Ting, (Garden Hall), China National Museum of Fine Arts, 1 Wusidajie, Dongcheng District, bus 104, 103, 111 to Meishuguan.

When: September 4-9.
Tel: 64016234.

Cartoon Art Work Exhibition by Feng Zikai

Where: China National Museum of Fine Arts, 1 Wusidajie, Dongcheng District.

When: Southwest corner on first floor, September 2
Tel: 64016234.

International Wine Exhibition

Wine lovers shouldn't miss this!

Where: China International Exhibition Center, bus 300 to Guozhan, Chaoyang District.

When: Sep. 4-Sep.7
Tel: 84602041

Sports & Activities**Learn Seal Carving**

The Chinese Culture Club has invited three seal (tuzhang) carvers to give a lesson in this ancient art. Conducted in a mansion beside the Forbidden City, the class is free of charge. Knives, paper and ink are provided; you only need to pay for the material (jade, wood or stone) used to carve your seal (5-10 yuan). English narration is provided.

Where: Beijing Friendship Association with Foreign Countries (Beijing Duiwai Youxie), Nanheyuan Dajie (南河沿大街), west of Wangfujing Street. Head north from the west side of Beijing Grand Hotel on Chang'an Avenue for about 200 metres. You will see a red gate on the west side of the street. Please R.S.V.P. in advance in order to ensure there is a seat available for you.

When: September 2 (Sunday), 4pm--6:30pm.

Tel: 8462-2081 or 1350-103-5145 for details.

Clone yourself? Well almost!

If you want to hang a life-like replica of your hand, or maybe your face on your living room wall, this shop is definitely for you!

Where: 6th floor of Huabei Dasha (华威大厦), Xidan, Xicheng District, bus 1, 4, 22, 57 or subway to Xidan.

Time: 9am-9pm

Tel: 66028888

**Chinese Kungfu Vs. Thai Boxing Contest**

Martial artists from China and Thailand will give you a night of kicks and punches.

Where: Beijing Workers' Stadium, west of Sanlitun, Chaoyang District, bus 113, 115 to Gongti.

When: September 8, 7:15pm.

Admission: 80, 180, 280, 380, 580, 800 yuan.

Tel: 65016655.

2nd Zhang Yiyuan Tea Culture Festival

Activities include how to taste & buy tea, the benefits of tea, and tea making methods.

Where: Zhang Yiyuan Main Store, 22 Dashilarjie, Qianmen, Chongwen District.

When: now-September 9.

www.Zhangyiyuan.com

Tel: 63046426, 63032056.

Music**Closing Ceremony of the 21st Universiade Culture Festival**

Performed by college students; folk music by People's University and orchestral music by Beijing Traffic University.

Where: Forbidden City Concert Hall, Zhongshan Park.

When: August 31, 7pm.

Tel: 65598285.

Philharmonic Autumn

The China Philharmonic Orchestra's first season in Beijing, featuring works by composers including Beethoven, Weber, Mendelssohn, Schumann and Brahms.

Where: Poly Theater, 14 Dongzhimen Nandajie, Dongcheng District, bus 115, 106 or subway to Dongsishitiao.

When: September 1, 7:30pm.

Tel: 65001188-5682.

Stairway to music 2001-Music Camp Closing Ceremony

Performed by China Philharmonic Orchestra. Director: Yu Long

Where: Forbidden City Concert Hall, Zhongshan Park.

When: Sunday, September 2,



7:30pm.

Admission: 10-60 yuan, 200 yuan box.

Tel: 65598285.

Piano Recital by Chu Wanghua

After living in Australia for over 20

years, Chu will return to Beijing for a series of special performances.

Where: Beijing Concert Hall, 1 Beixinhuajie, Liubukou, West Chang'an Avenue, Xicheng District, bus 7 to Liubukou.

When: mid September.

Tel: 66057006.

**200 Famous Foreign Songs Concert**

Conductor: Li Yuming. Performed by China Musicians Association Philharmonic Orchestra.

Where: National Library Concert Hall, 33 Zhongguancun Nandajie, Haidian District.

When: August 31, 7:30pm.

Admission: 20-60 yuan.

Tel: 68485462.

**Music from Get Lucky**

Tang Dynasty Band's Kaiser and his Spring & Autumn Band.

Where: Get Lucky, Taiyanggong, east of south gate of Jingmao Daxue, near Taiyang Market.

When: August 31, 9pm.

Admission: 20, 30 yuan.

Tel: 64299109.

819, 60, 107 to Gulou (Drum Tower), then go into Yandai Xiejie, turn left and walk 30 meters.

Open: 11am-2pm, 5pm-8:30pm.

Tel: 64042554.

Vogue

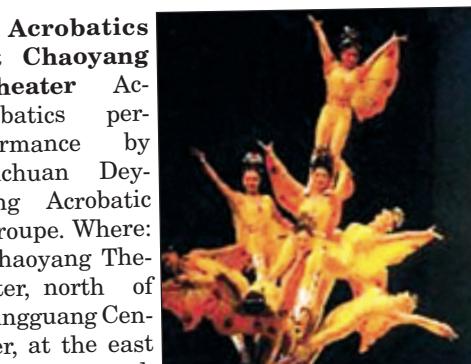
It may be the most popular dance club in Beijing. The art-deco interior and upstairs lounge areas are just like an LA nightclub. DJs Lotus and Yum Cha Cha spin techno, house and trance.

Where: 88 Gongti Donglu, north of the City Hotel (城市宾馆) on the west side of the street, Chaoyang District.

Open: 6pm-midnight.

Admission: around 50 yuan.

Tel: 64165316.



Lao She's Classic Drama
A brand new interpretation of Lao She's monumental work: *Four Generations under One Roof*. This is a condensed version, running for just 2 hours.

Where: Central Academy of Drama Theater, 39 Dongjinghutong Xianghui, Dongcheng District, bus 104, 108 to Beibingmisi (北兵马司).

When: Sep.7.

Ticket: 20-60 yuan.

Tel: 640178943.

Performances

Acrobatics at Chaoyang Theater Acrobatics performance by Sichuan Deyang Acrobatic Troupe. Where: Chaoyang Theater, north of Jingguang Center, at the east side of the road.

When: August 31, 7:15pm.

Admission: 120 yuan. Tel: 65072421.

Peking Opera By Beijing Peking Opera House. **Where:** Liyuan Theater, 175, Yong'anlu, Qianmen Hotel, Xuanwu District. **When:** August 31, 7:30pm. **Admission:** 30-150 yuan. Tel: 63016688-8860.

Pets Hospitals**Yi Ya Pet Center**

Add: 34 Gongtibei, Chaoyang District.

Tel: 65526177.

Universal Fraternity Animals Hospital

Add: 1 Wanquanhuanglu, Haidian District.

Tel: 82616141.

Movies**Italian Movie**

Visconti's *Giorni di Gloria*, (1945) and *The Damned*, (1969).

Where: Space for Imagination Coffee House (formerly Box Cafe), 5 Xiwangzhuang Xiaoqu, opposite Tsinghua Tongfang Mansion, Haidian District, bus 375 (branch line) or 355 to Shuangqinglu.

When: Saturday, September 1, 7pm.

Admission: 5 yuan.

Tel: 62791280.

For Fun (Zhao Le)

Director: Ning Ying. 1992, 90 minutes. This film portrays the lives of Beijing's "Lao Bai Xing" (ordinary people) before the city is completely modernized. Ning Ying is one of China's leading female directors.

Where: Cherry Lane Movies, Sino-Japanese Youth Exchange Center, Intl. Conference Hall, 40 Liangmaqiaolu (1km east of Kempinski Hotel).

When: September 15, 8pm.

Admission: 50 yuan.

Tel



By Thomas Kloubert

Beijing's western suburbs are a treasure trove of stories and legends just waiting to be discovered. Take the Fragrant Hills: they're littered with temples, pavilions, gardens, even European villas that by way of a few anecdotes can be brought back to life again. One such curiosity that sees no more than a handful of visitors per month is the Dojo of the Spearhead Battalion of the Eight Banners!

It is situated on the southern slopes of the Fragrant Hills, about where the old Imperial hunting grounds used to be. Known commonly as "Tuancheng" or circular city, this fortress-like structure with massive crenellated walls is very hard to miss. Unlike its twin namesakes in the Summer Palace and Beihai, this Tuancheng was not constructed for Imperial recreation, but to train an elite detachment of the Eight Banner corps.

Prior to the establishment of the Qing Dynasty in 1636, the Manchus were essentially a collection of feudal domains whose society was modeled along the lines of Chinese garrisons and hence highly regimented. The Eight Banner system was set up under Nurhachi (1559-1626) to facilitate mobilization and resulted in what was to become until the end of the eighteenth century, the most effective fighting force in east Asia. The Eight Banners, distinguished by the colors of their flags and regalia, were divided into the three inner and five outer banners. All the banners were headed by a lieutenant-general (Dutong) and two deputy lieutenant-generals (Fudutong) from the ranks of the Manchu or Mongol nobility.

After 1644 these banners were moved to Beijing and assigned billets in accordance with the compass directions associated with their particular color. They also kept a 30-40,000 strong garrison force within the walls of the capital to protect the Forbidden City, patrol the residential areas and man the 16 gates of the inner and outer city. By the middle of the 19th century an estimated 130,000 bannermen lived in the inner city and the suburban districts around the imperial villas.

The Tuancheng is one of the

few relics of the Eight Banners still standing. It was commissioned by order of the Emperor Qianlong in the year 1748 following a rather dubious victory in the first Jinshuan campaign.

In 1746 the Jinshuan tribes of present-day western Sichuan were involved in a territorial dispute. On the ill advice of a court official in Chengdu, an expeditionary force consisting of various banners was dispatched to quell the civil unrest. What were in fact no more than minor hostilities between rival factions of a people numbering scarcely 30,000 in population, quickly became a disaster with the arrival of the Qing troops. Accustomed to fighting on the plains, the expeditionary force was ill-equipped and unprepared for the mountainous terrain and harsh weather conditions that faced them in the upper reaches of Sichuan and Tibet. Adding to the logistical nightmare imposed by its inaccessibility, was the custom of the Jinshuan people to live in fortified watchtowers that commanded all approaches.

Most of these fortified towers were in excess of ten meters, with many as high as thirty. They were too steep to scale, extremely difficult to take, and impossible to bypass. It was the proverbial case of the three Romans holding a bridge and the Manchu army lost at every turn. A stalemate ensued and three commanders were beheaded by order of Qianlong before a truce was engineered and the siege lifted. Face was saved and a victory proclaimed. The campaign took two years and cost ten thousand casualties, it also emptied the state coffers by more than 20 million taels of silver.

The construction of the Tuancheng fort was a direct result of the first Jinshuan war. Qianlong realized that his troops though formidable on the plain were next to useless when confronted

with fortified mountain positions. Tuancheng was built with the sole purpose of training an elite corps of bannermen in the art of scaling the indigenous Jinshuan towers. To this effect no less than 68 copies of those particular towers were constructed in the surrounding hills by prisoners taken during the campaign.

Two thousand men were selected from the banners to begin training on the new obstacle course. They would practice in their individual units on these scattered edifices and take part in combined maneuvers with drill and archery demonstrations at the fort for the emperor. In its day the Tuancheng was fronted by a large parade ground with a gate to one side and a mock city wall with five gates and seven towers on the other. Through this the Manchu cavalry practiced charging. Local legend has it that the walls were painted red at the top and turquoise at the bottom to ruin the fengshui of a Ming tomb close by. This particular tower and wall backdrop were unfortunately demolished during the Great Leap Forward, but some foot-high debris can still be found. Immediately in front of the fort is the Yanwu Ting, the building from which Emperor Qianlong reviewed his troops. It is now a small museum with a plywood replica of the throne, models of weapons and figurines of bannermen in armor. There is a fascinating collection of maps that show the western suburbs as they once were and reproductions of paintings of bannermen at Tuancheng attributed to the Jesuit priest-artist Castiglione.

The building on the left, destroyed in the 50's and since reconstructed, houses a photographic collection of Jinshuan towers as they appear today. The building on the right was burned down in 1900 and is currently being restored. Tuancheng itself is slightly oblong, fifty meters

wide from east to west and forty from north to south. Two buildings believed to have been either guardhouses or offices flank the enclosed area. The surrounding ramparts are eleven meters high and five in width. They are accessible by two stairways and offer an excellent view of the surrounding countryside and Beijing city. One of the gate towers is open to the public and inside, a huge marble stele inscribed with the handwriting of Qianlong commemorates the defeat of the Jinshuan by the Manchus in 1756.

The cast-iron cannons cemented into the battlements are actually borrowed for effect from the Great Wall. Looking west you will see a small pagoda in the middle of a peach orchard. It is difficult to get to but worth the effort, for it and the stele inside are all that remain of the Shi Sheng Si, the Temple of Real Victory, dedicated to the Jinshuan campaign.

The Jinshuan wars were one of the key contributing factors in the decline of the Qing dynasty. In 1771 the Jinshuan troubles began afresh, and even with the crack spearhead battalion, trained specifically for this purpose, it took the Manchus five years and more than 60,000 troops to achieve a victory. The campaign cost in excess of 70 million taels of silver and left the military in a shambles. Tuancheng fort was rarely used after that and soon fell into disrepair.

During the Second World War it became part of the Japanese North China Agricultural Experiment Base, and after Liberation, it continued to be used for agricultural experiments. At one time pigeons, rabbits, dogs, and even pigs were bred inside its confines and a peach orchard was planted all around. In the late eighties the Beijing Cultural Relics Bureau acquired part of the area and with an initial investment of 500,000 yuan, began restoration work on the fort. Today Tuancheng occasionally doubles up as a film set, but once in a while it is put back to its original use and martial arts shows and competitions are held within its walls.

Where: No.1 Hongqicun (红旗村) village, Xiangshanlan (香山南路), Haidian District.

How to get there: bus 360 from the Beijing Zoo, or bus 318 from Pingguoyuan (苹果园) to Hongqicun

Tel: 6259 1609

Open: 9am - 4pm

Admittance: 2 yuan

If you have any bright ideas for great days out around Beijing, we'd love to hear from you. Please send any ideas, photos, itineraries to us.

Contact: Jiang Zhong, Tel: 6590 2520, e-mail: bjtodayplan@ynet.com

Fort



Photos by Thomas Kloubert

Gate Tower of Tuancheng